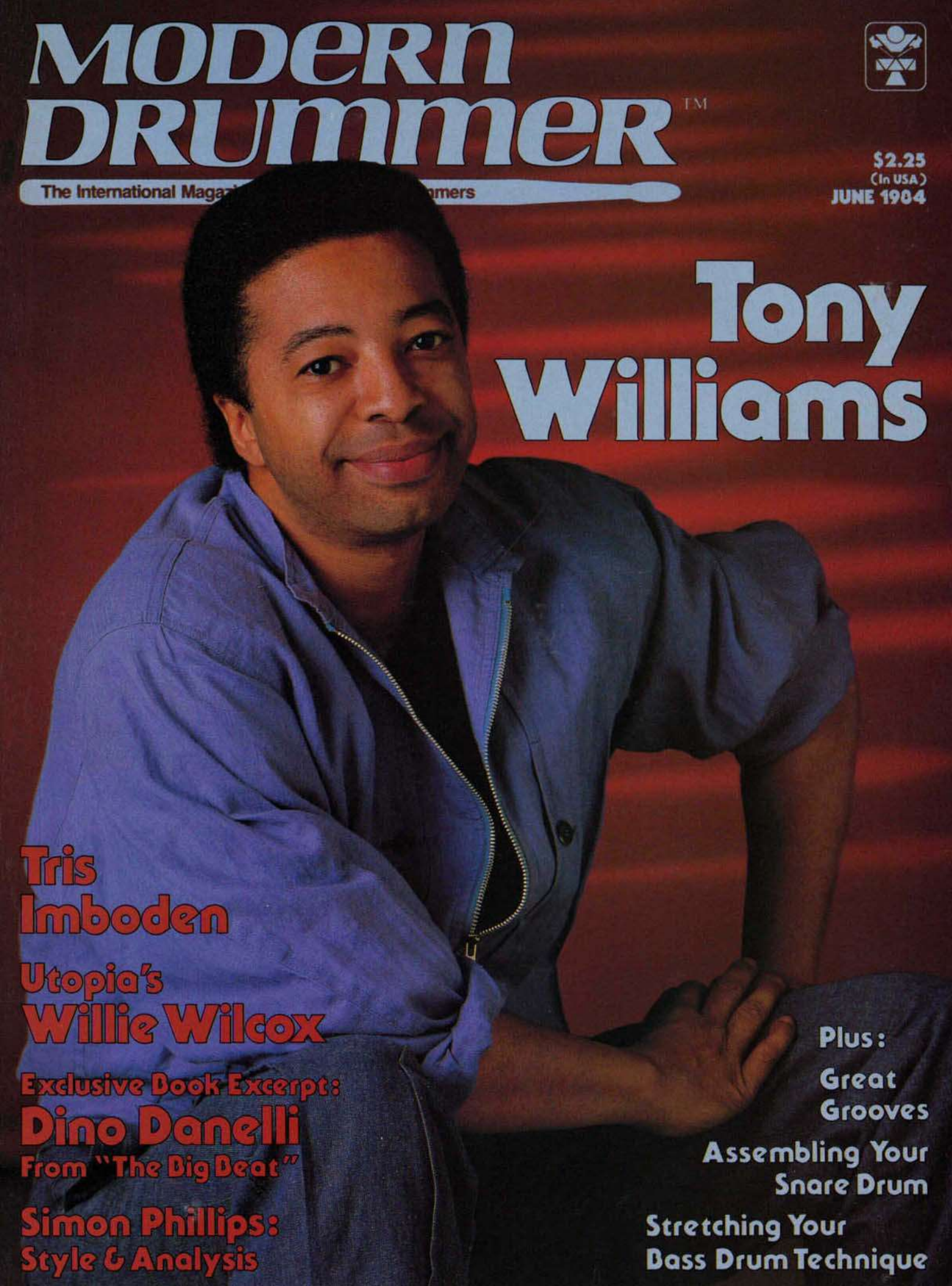
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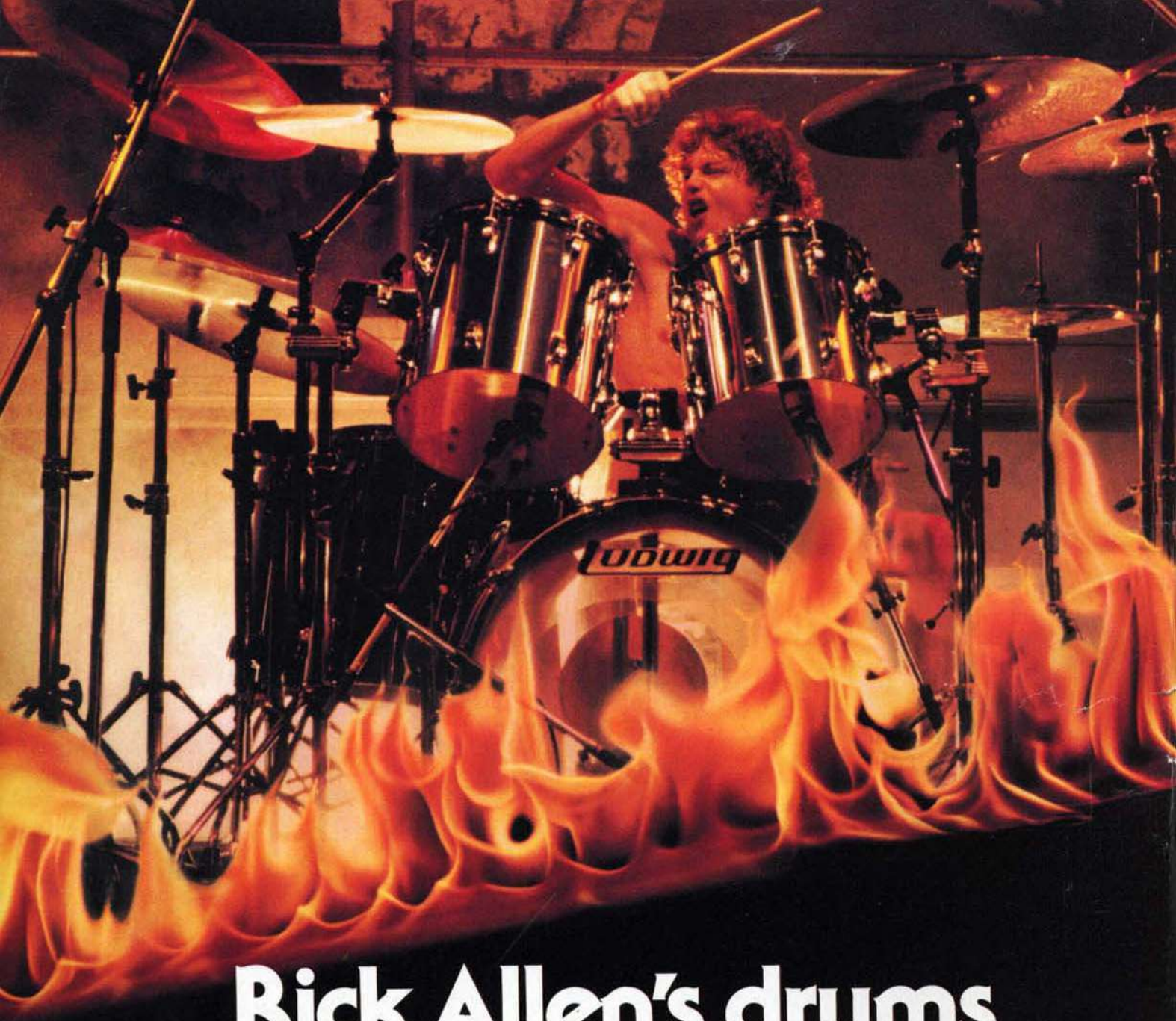

Rick Allen's drums have to take a lot of heat.

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FEATURES

TONY WILLIAMS
It's hard to believe that 20 years have gone by since Miles Davis hired a 17-year-old drummer named Tony Williams, who proceeded to figuratively grab the drumming world by the throat and shake it, first with Davis and then with his own group, Lifetime. As Williams got older, he backed away from the public view somewhat; it's been five years since his last album. But he hasn't been idle, and now Tony is ready to talk about what he's been doing, and why.
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WILLIE WILCOX
Wilcox, currently the drummer tor Utopia, has also worked with such prominent artists as Bette Midler and Hall & Oates. In addition to being a talented drummer, Wilcox is a singer, songwriter and album coproducer. He plays various instruments and is proficient in several musical genres.
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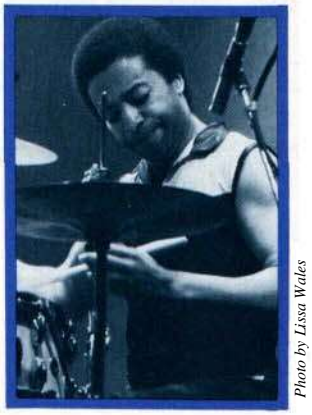

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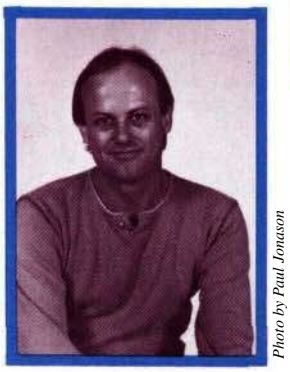
Photo by Rick Mattingly



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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

On Review

There are three editorial departments in *MD* which are devoted to reviewing published and recorded material. *Printed Page* is reserved for reviews of drum books and solo pieces, while *On Track* and *On Tape* deal with recordings and videotape materials, respectively.

Needless to say, a wealth of material comes in from most of the major publishers and recording companies across the country. However, keep in mind that *MD's* review pages are equally available to the smaller companies and individuals who are venturing into the areas of publishing, recording or video.

If you've written and published a drum book, and are making a valiant attempt to promote and distribute it on your own, please don't hesitate to send us a copy. Assuming your material is in published form (we do not review proposed manuscripts) and is worthy of review, it has just as much chance of being mentioned in *Printed Page* as does a publication from a major publishing house.

The same policy applies to recordings. The *On Track* editors are basically looking for drumming that is worthy of special attention. This does not necessarily mean that only recordings by drummer-led groups, from major labels, or by name artists will be reviewed. If the drummer has simply done a superb job as an accompanist on the session, it will very likely be brought to your attention through *On Track.* As with printed material, it's the quality of the recording that matters, not the stature of the individual represented.

What about self-produced products? *MD's Just Drums* is more of a press-release approach rather than a product review, but nonetheless, if you've managed to get your product manufactured and on the market, feel free to send us an announcement along with a photo. The majority of press releases come from the major companies, who often maintain staffs or agencies to do just that. However, don't take that to mean that a new product from a lesser-known entrepreneur will not get equal billing.

Books, recordings (LP's only, please), videotapes and press release materials should be sent to *Modern Drummer,* c/o the appropriate department. Be sure to include your address and the selling price. Rest assured that your material *will* be looked at or listened to, and if it meets *MD's* standards, it will be assigned to an editor for review. Also, the materials you send us cannot be returned, so keep that in mind when you submit them.

Once again, it's time for *MD's Roberto Petaccia Memorial Scholarship* which is awarded to a talented drummer, deprived of an opportunity for advanced musical education.

The scholarship is coordinated through the Berklee College Of Music in Boston, and the final winner is selected by *MD.* The cutoff date for entries is December 15, 1984. For further information on how you may apply, write to Berklee College Of Music, c/o *MD's* Roberto Petaccia Memorial Scholarship, 1140 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02215.

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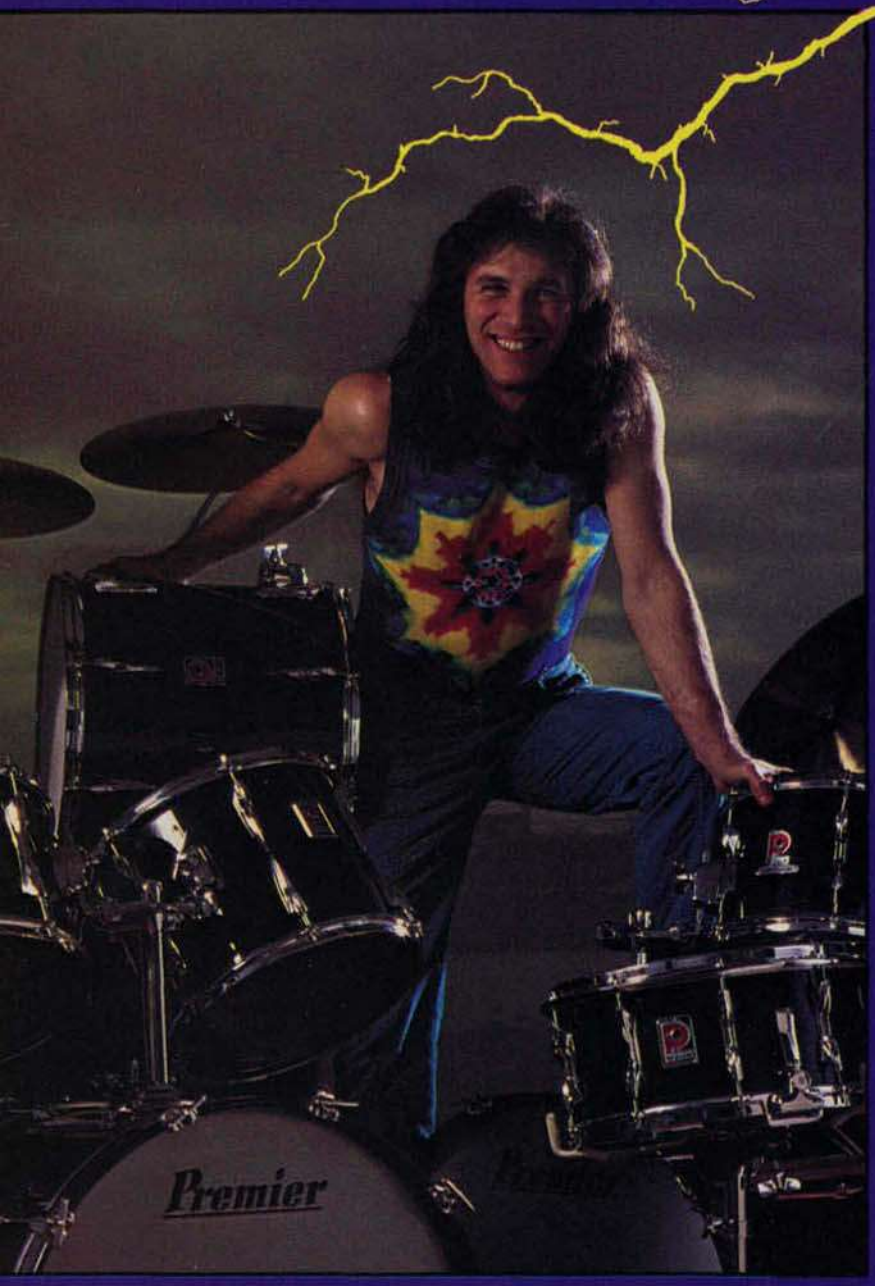

Rod Morgenstein has given the world of percussion some of the most musical lightning licks yet heard. The long-time drummer for The Dregs and now for The Steve Morse Band, Rod's playing is charged with originality and feeling.

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READER'S PLATFORM

ANDY NEWMARK

Andy Newmark is a man who speaks only the truth. Thanks, Andy, for being so up front about yourself, the people you've worked with, and the music scene in general. And thanks, *MD,* for finally giving this great drummer the space he deserves.

Stephen Theard
Los Angeles, CA

MAGADINI ON JONES

I really enjoyed the January issue of *Modern Drummer.* Many interesting and diverse articles ... I read it from cover to cover. Chip Stern did an excellent job with Jo Jones. I had the fortunate opportunity to work opposite "Papa Jo" some years ago in San Francisco. Jo, among all his other talents, was the most incredible brush player I have ever seen. Fast tempos with brushes are difficult enough, but Jo plays up tempos with the brushes flying a foot or more off the drumhead—smiling all the way!

Pete Magadini
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

JOEY KRAMER

Your interview with Joey Kramer of Aerosmith proves the point that a good, basic, solid timekeeper can still compete with the best. Joey's open attitude and non-intimidating personality are things that other drummers should share. In today's very complicated and technical world, it's nice to see down-to-earth people given the credit they deserve. Good job and good luck, Joey.

Stan Zeman
Morgan, PA

EUROPEAN DRUMMERS: RESPONSE

This is my opinion in response to the letter from Clav Grossman about European drummers (March '84). I have little interest in reading articles about people who have had no musical influence on me. Not every article in your magazine is going to appeal to everyone, but I would venture to say that a *majority* of the readers would appreciate much more a story on Carl Palmer than on Joki Leibezeit. That's not to say that we shouldn't be introduced to these lesser-known artists, but certainly not in lieu of more famous people.

Phil Collins is, at this point, my favorite musical performer, writer and producer, and the feature on him was perfect timing—right at the start of the Genesis tour. I'm sure there's room in this magazine for a few words about Ivan Krillzarin, but as for me, thanks for Phil.

Ron Harsch
New Windsor, NY

JACKIE SANTOS

Your January '84 feature on Jackie Santos was great! I never thought—two decades ago, watching him practice on just a snare drum and a cymbal tied onto a beam in his cellar—that he would become such a versatile drummer. Well, he has. Others should take notice of his skill and drive as a serious musician. I hope he will soon enjoy the fruits of his labor.

Gary Hansen
N. Quincy, MA

FOCUS ON TEACHERS

I have to say I thoroughly enjoyed the *Focus On Teachers* feature. It was well done and highly informative, and gave me plenty of food for thought regarding my own teaching practice. Keep up the excellent work.

Ron Jordan
Muscatine, IA

CUBAN CONTROVERSY

Regarding the article on Daniel Ponce and me which appeared in your January issue, please allow me to set the record straight. I did *not* say ". . . the rhythm that the Puerto Ricans call *bomba* and *plena* is Cuban." Instead, I pointed out that the only rhythms that I knew were genuinely Puerto Rican were precisely the *bomba* and *plena* as well as *Musica Jibara.* What the author transcribed not only contradicted my statement but put words in my mouth which could only have been uttered by someone lacking even the most basic knowledge of music from the Caribbean. Further, Ms. Course's blunder could create (justified) ill feelings amongst my good Puerto Rican friends and fellow musicians.

Ignacio Berroa
Bronx, NY

Leslie Gourse replies: "I am absolutely sure that Mr. Berroa told me that 'the rhythm that the Puerto Ricans call bomba *and* plena *is Cuban.' That remark fits in with the whole paragraph, and furthermore fits in with remarks made to me by several Cuban musicians. The claim is, in general, that Cuban music is one of the most influential in Latin America—the other being Brazilian—and that Puerto Rican music is derived from Cuban music. This is what Berroa said, and what I quoted him as saying. I understand that there is a conflict between Puerto Ricans and Cubans over this kind of statement. Nevertheless, it is said all of the time. Daniel Ponce said the same thing in the article."*

This is in regards to the interview with Ignacio Berroa and Daniel Ponce. *Modern Drummer* rarely publishes anything regarding Latin music, so it was a welcome treat to read this interview. Unfortunately, the interview disturbed me because of several statements Mr. Ponce made regarding the way Puerto Rican musicians interpret Cuban music—specifically, the interpretation of clave. As a Puerto Rican musician who has been involved in Afro-Cuban music as well as all the other multitude of styles involving what we call Latin music, I was offended by Mr. Ponce's remark that the 2/3 clave is too difficult and complex for anyone who is not Cuban. Most contemporary Afro-Cuban dance music uses 2/3 clave, and most of the musicians recording this music are non-Cuban! In fact, many are not even Hispanic! But they have studied, lived and breathed the rich tradition and heritage that Afro-Cuban music represents. To anyone reading between the lines, Mr. Ponce's statements could be interpreted as being racist. It would be as if a white symphonic player stated that blacks can't play orchestral music because they lack the "feel for it."

Following in suit, Mr. Berroa says, "When I arrived in this country, I thought you could find a lot of drummers who could do a lot of things. But it's not true. One drummer plays funk, while another plays straight ahead. And then it's impossible to find a drummer who can both read music and play a lot of things." That's one of the most ridiculous statements I've ever read, and probably insulted every drummer/percussionist who has ever done show or studio work.

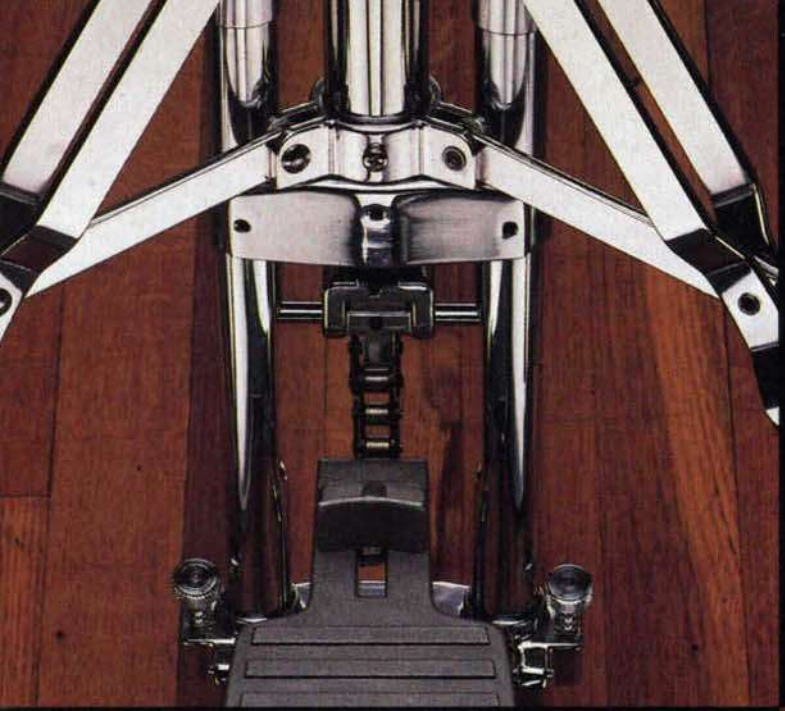
Please don't get me wrong because I personally know both Mr. Ponce and Mr. Berroa and have nothing against them. But I felt that some of the comments made by them were totally false and biased, and were born out of nationalistic pride. Sometimes pride can color the issue at hand, and I felt that I had to write this letter in defense of those Latin musicians who are striving to progress and preserve the cultural heritage that is Afro-Latin music.

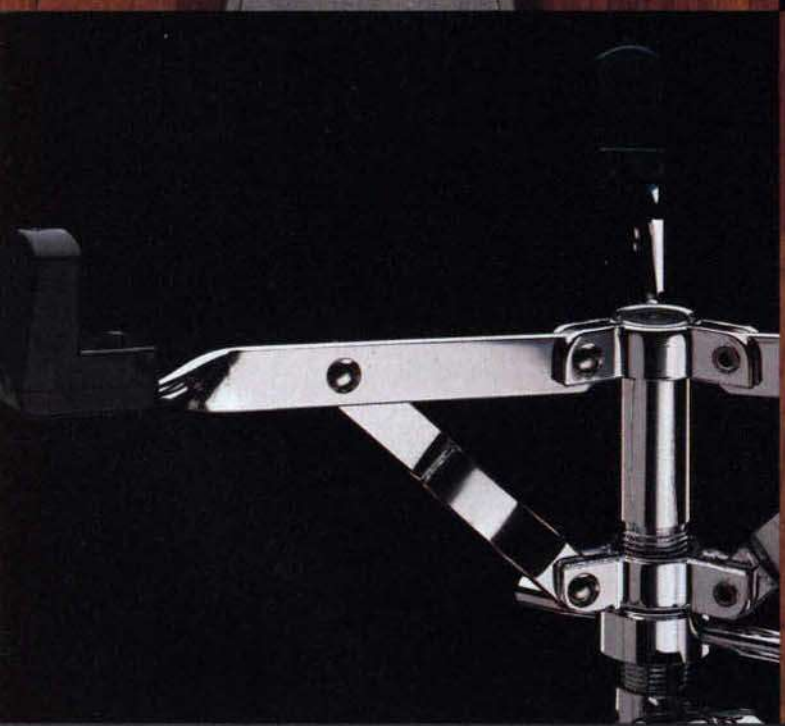
Roberto "Bobby" Sanabria
Mongo Santamaria Band
Sunnyside, NY

SOUNDSHEETS

Thank you Paiste and *Modern Drummer* for the soundsheet of Terry Bozzio. It is an excellent idea, and I would personally like to see more of them. Keep up the good work!

Steve Nelson
Brookings, SD





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ASK A PRO

ELVIN JONES

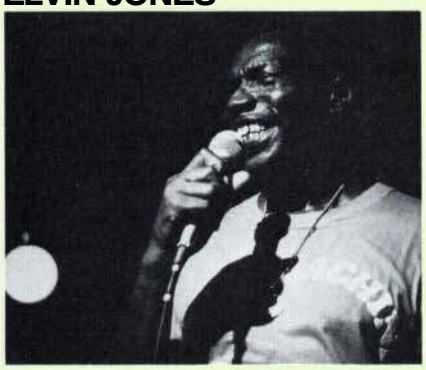


Photo by Rick Mattingly

Q. I've read that you sometimes do free concerts at prisons. I was thinking about doing that myself. How do you set up prison concerts? How long do you perform? What happens at these concerts?

Chris Kearns
Lake Park, FL

A. For many, many years, I've done benefit concerts at prisons and correctional institutions. Usually, it's a very simple process. In the case of jails and local correctional institutions, you can contact the sheriff of the county concerned. In the case of a larger city like New York, you can contact the Department of Corrections. In Chicago, you can contact the County Correctional Department, and so forth across the country. But usually, it's the Sheriff's Department that handles the recreational activity for the institutions. You can write your request to the sheriff and mention how you can be contacted. Usually, the sheriff will respond. They're very happy to have entertainers do concerts, because not many people find the time to give themselves freely to other people in situations like that. So there is a great need, and volunteers are always well received. The Sheriff's Departments are very cordial and helpful as far as transportation is concerned. Sometimes you can even have lunch at the institution. Every institution is different.

The situation is similar for state prisons. You write to the State Board of Prisons, and they will put you in touch with the appropriate Correction Department office to communicate your willingness to do concerts.

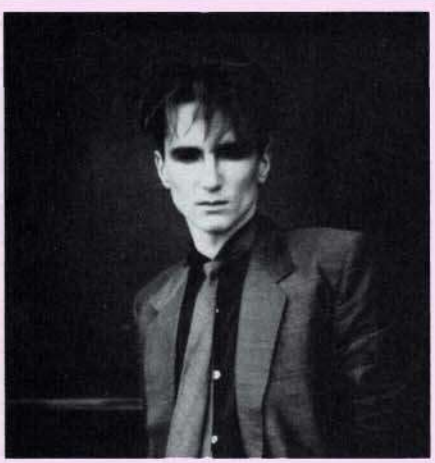
These concerts last for an hour or two, which is the same amount of time that commercial concerts last. I'm also given ample time to speak, and to talk to individuals. I think that it's a very rewarding experience for the human spirit. You get an entirely different perception of what prisons are. You have a different point of view about the whole idea, and it gives you intense personal gratification for having done something useful.

GREG BISSONETTE

Q. A while back I saw you in Tuscon with the Maynard Ferguson Band. Everything you did was super, and extremely tasteful. Are you teaching out in California when you're not on the road? Would you recommend any specific places to study in the California area?

Gregg Delfiner
Tuscon, AZ

A. Thanks very much for the kind words. Yes, I do teach privately in Los Angeles, and can be reached at (213) 366-7524, or by writing me at 17173 Germain Street, Grenada Hills, CA 91344. As far as other places to study in California, I think Percussion Institute of Technology (P.I.T.) would be great. Ralph Humphrey and Joe Porcaro both teach there, as well as Steve Houghton, one of my former teachers and a fantastic player. Dave Garibaldi is at the Dick Grove School of Music here in L.A., so that would also be an excellent place to study.



Q. I have considered purchasing three of the largest-sized Remo *RotoToms,* but I am wary of the stability problems which may be present from mounting them on conventional cymbal stands. From your own experience, could you tell me how you mount your *RotoToms* to ensure optimum balance and stability?

Terry Waara
Hibbing, MN

TERRY BOZZIO

A. I use 16" and 18" Rotos as *one would use traditional floor toms. I mount each of them on a Remo* AD-100 *adapter which is connected to a cut-down Ludwig* Atlas *cymbal stand top, which is then inserted into a Tama drum stand base. The whole thing stands only 22" high and the playing surface is horizontal, so it's very stable.*

Additionally, I use 10", 12" and 14" Rotos as *one would use traditional shell-mounted toms. These are mounted on Tama holders with three* AD-1 OOs *per each Roto and two pieces of/4" steel rod per each* Roto. *(The rod is actually an old 1/4" floor tom leg cut down to size with a hacksaw.) By attaching the* Roto *to an* AD-100, *then to a 3" piece of rod, then to a second* AD-100, *then to a 10" to 12" piece of rod, then to a third* AD-100 *and finally to the tom holder, you can construct a very solid* RotoTom *holder which has complete flexibility of position.*

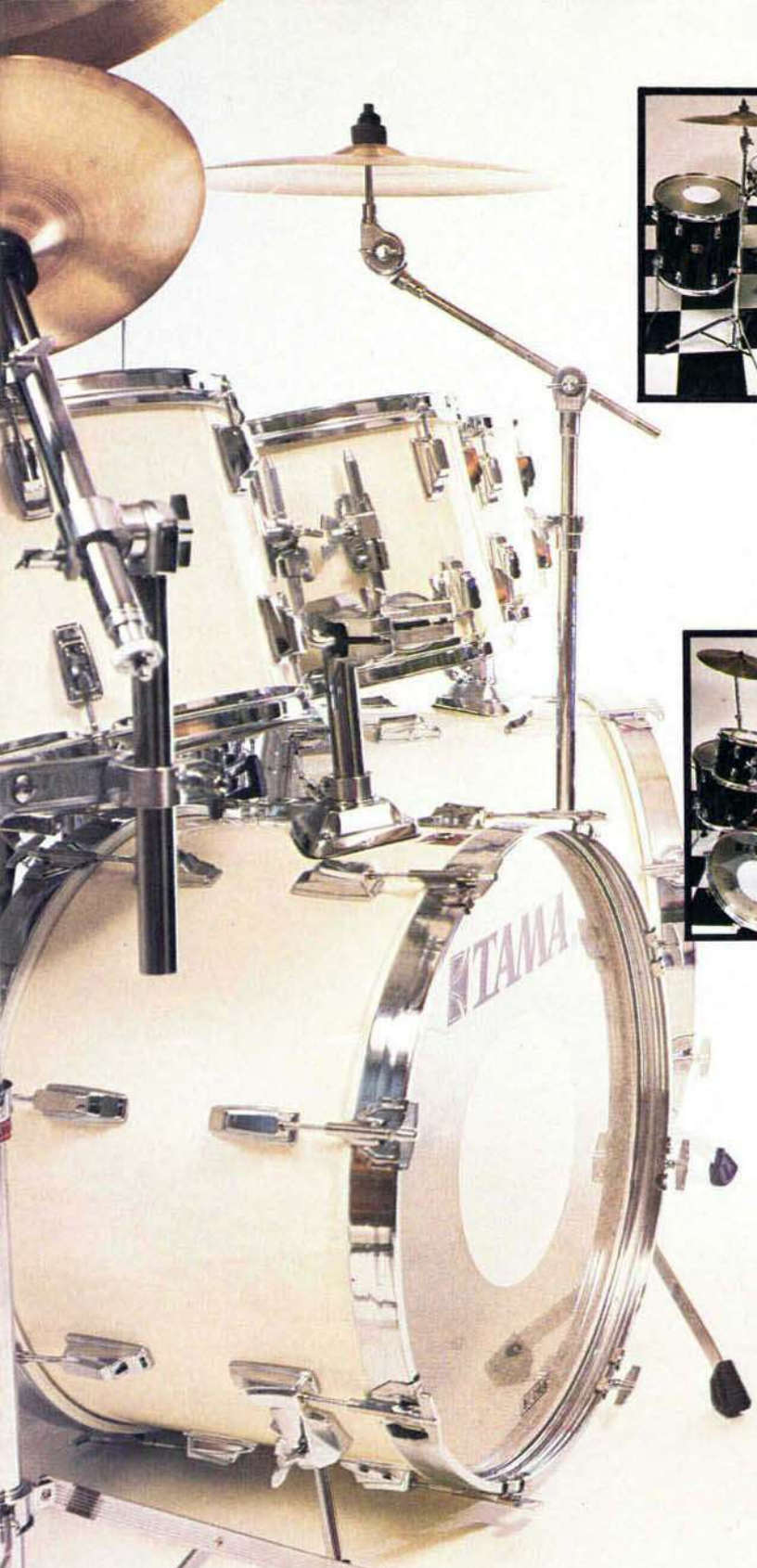
RUSS KUNKEL

Q. I recently saw you play on Jackson Browne's Lawyers *In Love* tour. I would like to know what kind of drums, heads, muffling, cymbals, and mic's you were using. I love your playing. You have a great feel for the right thing to play.

Gary Birch
Elizabethtown, NJ

A. The set was a Yamaha 9000 Recording Series. / used *Remo clear* Ambassadors *on the tops of the toms, and clear* Diplomats *on the bottoms. The snare had a coated* Ambassador. *There was no muffling used on the drums. My cymbals were Paistes, and the mic's were Shure* SM-47s *and* SM-57s, *with the exception of the kick drum, which used a Sennheiser.*

continued on page 118



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TONY WI

In order to attain the title "legend," a musician usually has to have been around a lot longer than Tony Williams. But not only has the 38-year-old Williams earned the title, he has actually been holding it for quite some time—since he was a teenager, in fad. Tony was hired by Miles Davis at the age of 17, and that band, featuring Ron Carter, Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter, was THE innovative group of the '60s. Playing the older Davis material, Williams proved himself well able to fill the shoes of his predecessors—drummers like Philly Joe Jones and Jimmie Cobb. But he was no mere imitator. Already, his playing had distinctive touches that hinted at things to come. For example, where the mainstream jazz drummers of the '50s would "drop bombs" with their bass drums, Williams tended to punctuate his timekeeping by setting off multiple explosions using his entire kit. And as the music moved away from traditional jazz rhythms and approached a straight 8th-note feel, Williams defined the role of the "fusion" drummer by combining his formidable jazz training and technique with his teenager-growing-up-in-the- '60s affinity for rock.

How was it that someone so young could have had such a total command of his instrument? Certainly, a lot of it had to do with that intangible something called "talent. "But no matter how great a talent is, it must be nurtured. In Tony's case, much of that nurturing came from his saxophone-playing father who took Tony to the clubs in Boston, where they lived, and let Tony sit in with his dance group at the age of nine. A few years later, such drummers as Art Blakey and Max Roach were letting Tony sit in with their groups. Tony became friends with many of the prominent drummers, who recognized his ability and took the young drummer under their wings. "Max Roach, Art Blakey and Philly Joe Jones were my first drum idols, and I got to meet them when I was very young, which was really exciting, " Williams remembers. "Jimmie Cobb, Louis Hayes and Albert 'Tootie' Heath were another threesome for me. Those guys were like my big brothers. There was a lot of animosity from some of the older players because I was competing for their gigs, but these guys were always very kind to me, and I appreciated that very much. It was a big help that I can only realize now. "Roy Haynes was another influence, as was Alan Dawson, who Tony studied with.

By his mid-teens, Williams was working regularly in Boston clubs, playing with various organ trios, as well as doing a number of gigs with Sam Rivers. One night Jackie McLean came in, and subsequently invited Tony to go to New York, to work with him in a play called The Connection. *During Williams' stint with McLean, Miles Davis heard him, and in May of 1963, Tony was invited to join the Davis group.*

*For someone Tony's age, keeping up with the Miles Davis Quintet should have been more than enough, but not only did Williams handle that gig with aplomb, he also released two solo albums on Blue Note—*Lifetime *and* Spring*—which showed that he was equally accomplished in playing free music. It also indicated that Williams had some ideas of his own, as all of the compositions on those albums were Williams' originals.*

*In February 1969 Tony made his last recording with Miles Davis—*In A Silent Way. *Although the Davis group was at its height, Williams feared that he was taking on Davis' style. As he told an interviewer, "I realized that I had to start doing something for myself and find out exactly what it was I had and what I didn't have."*

What Tony had was a vision of the future. He revealed that vision with a double album entitled Emergency *(which was reissued under the title* Once In A Lifetime). *The group was called The Tony Williams Lifetime, and featured guitarist John McLaughlin and organist Larry Young. Combining the technique and finesse of jazz with the energy and volume of rock, this was the group that paved the way for a generation of fusion groups such as McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra, Chick Corea's Return To Forever, and Larry Coryell's Eleventh House. This album also firmly established the fact that Williams was a force to be reckoned with, both as a drummer and as a leader.*

And then something went wrong. Williams' next two albums, Turn It Over *and* Ego, *were not nearly as well received by the critics or the public as* Emergency *had been. Some felt that Williams had gone a little too far out in his musical exploits. Others accused him of selling out and trying to be commercial. But perhaps the real problem was that the "legend" of Tony Williams had turned into something that no one, including Williams himself, could live up to. He wasn 't allowed to merely mark time; every album he made was expected to set a new standard. He tried hiring a completely new band and they recorded The* Old Bum's Rush. *When it virtually bombed, Tony disappeared.*

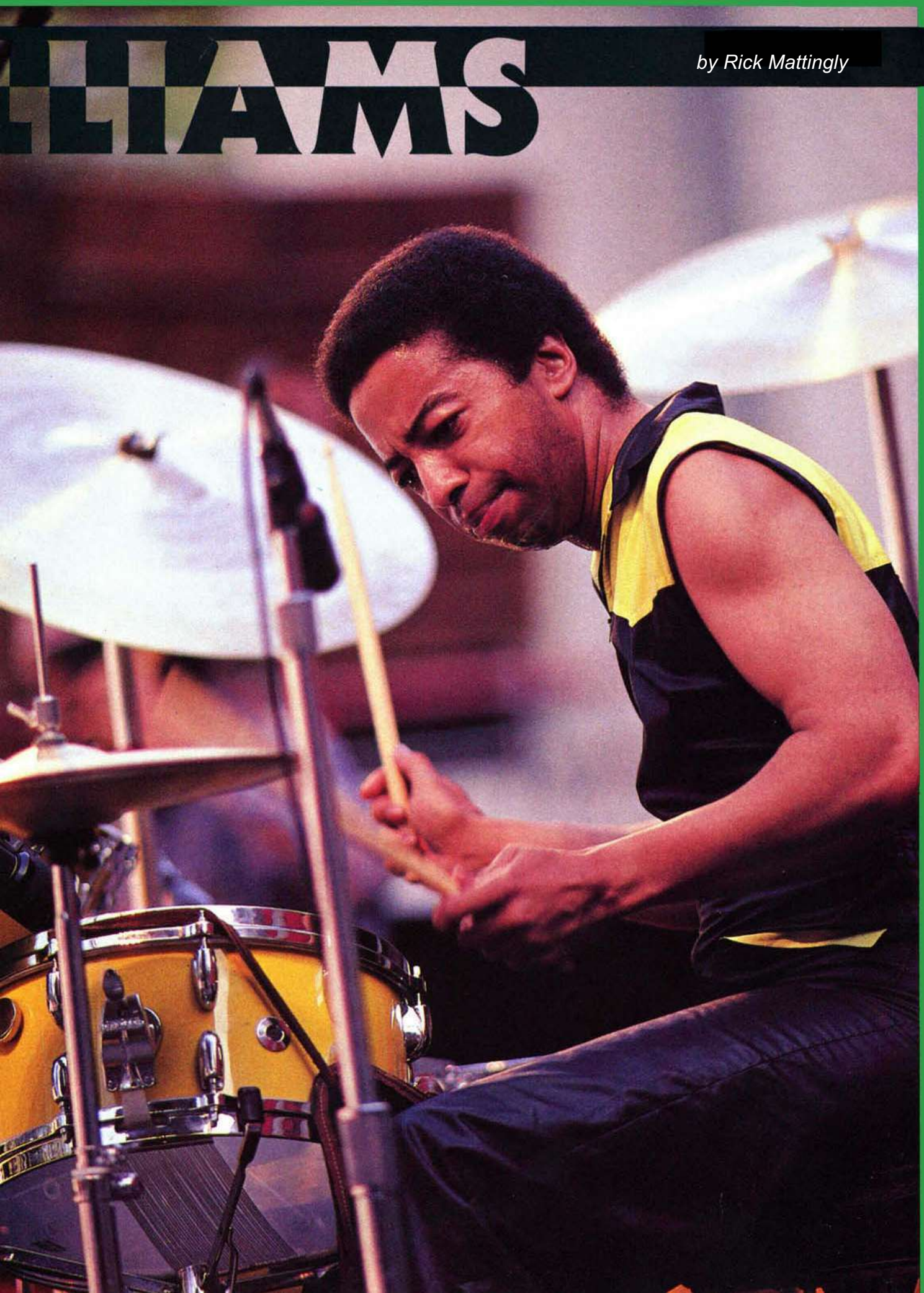
But the legend continued. For the next couple of years, Tony remained among the top five drummers in the down beat *readers poll. Even though he wasn't putting out records, and even though the last couple of records he did put out were not what people had expected, still, everyone had fond memories of what he had done with Miles Davis and with the original Lifetime band. His fans knew that sooner or later he'd be back.*

He finally popped up again in 1975 with a new album called Believe It, followed shortly by Million

Photo by Veryl Oakland

LLIAMS

by Rick Mattingly



Dollar Legs. *Both albums featured guitarist Allan Holdsworth, and were basically rock oriented. While these albums were not exactly the answer to the critics' prayers, nevertheless, enough time had elapsed that a lot of people were simply relieved to see that Tony was still around. And after several years of predictable pyrotechnics from a number of self-indulgent "fusion" drummers, it was nice to have the man who started it all remind everyone that energy and technique must be combined with taste.*

Williams then turned up in a couple of situations which let everyone know that he was still true to his heritage. First, he toured and recorded with V.S.O.P., which reunited him with the Miles Davis band of the '60s (Hancock, Shorter, and Carter, with Freddie Hubbard on trumpet). Jazz critics were quick to welcome them back to the realm of mainstream acoustic jazz, and hoped that they would not go astray again. Williams reassured them shortly thereafter. When Max Cordon invited him to bring a trio into the Village Vanguard in New York, Tony called Hank Jones and Ron Carter, thus forming what became known as The Great Jazz Trio. In addition, he could be found recording with such artists as Sonny Rollins and Weather Report.

Williams was back on the scene, but one thing had people a little confused. Just what kind of drummer had Tony decided to be? He had proven himself in a number of different genres. Which one represented the "real" Tony Williams? The answer came in '79 with the release of The Joy Of Flying: *Tony liked to play a lot of different things. The music on that album ranged from free jazz with Cecil Taylor to hard rock with Brian Auger and Ronnie Montrose. A few people complained about a cohesive lack of direction, but they missed the point. Combining all of those forms on one album, while retaining the unique character of each, was a direction in itself. As for sales, it was Tony's most successful album in years.*

"I REALLY THINK THAT THE DRUMS ARE AS POETIC AND ROMANTIC AS ANY INSTRUMENT."

Unfortunately, '79 was not a good year for the record business, and Tony lost his recording contract as part of a massive belt-tightening in the record industry. He has continued to turn up here and there though, enough to let people know he's still active. In the meantime, something else has happened that further confirms his status as a legend. A whole generation of drummers such as Vinnie Colaiuta, Peter Erskine, Andy Newmark, and Steve Smith—some of whom aren't even all that much younger than Williams—have named him as an influence. And when Tony gave a clinic at last year's PAS convention, you only had to look in the eyes of the other clinicians—all of whom attended Williams 'clinic—to know that the man behind the big yellow Gretsch set was someone special.

RM: What has been happening recently in your career?

TW: Well, last summer I played with V.S.O.P. II for three months. We did a big tour. We played Japan for about two-and-a-half weeks, we did the States, and we did Europe. We *worked* for three months. I've also been doing some demo recordings, trying to put some new music together. But the biggest thing I've done and been most fascinated with are the musical studies I've been doing over the last five years. I'm beginning now to be able to use those things.

RM: What specifically are you studying?

TW: Composition. It's like a five-year college course in composition, but I'm taking private lessons from Dr. Robert Greenberg, who's a faculty member of UC Berkeley. This is something that I've always wanted to do in order to take some of the mystery out of certain things that I heard, and wondered about. Learning these things has just been amazing, and I'm so happy to be able to do this. Specifically I've been studying all the different tools you need to use when you write. It's fascinating, and it's been so much fun.

RM: Are you trying to make up for any schooling that you missed by going on the road when you were 17? Most people go to school at that age, and then go on the road. You've done it in reverse.

TW: That's interesting, but no, I don't feel that I missed anything. I've always been a student; I've always been studying, constantly. Learning has always been exciting for me. I'm always learning something. For example, when I moved to California, I didn't know how to swim, but now I've learned how and I've overcome my fear of deep water. So I've always been learning something.

RM: Has your study of composition affected your approach to the drums?

TW: No. I'm trying to get my composition to the point where it's equal to my drumming.

RM: When a person does something well, it's sometimes hard to start something new, because you immediately want to be able to do the new thing on the level you're used to being at.

TW: Yeah, it's very frustrating. It was very easy for me to reach out and say that I wanted to do something, and find out where I had to go, and then go there. The hard part was doing it in the beginning when I didn't know anything and I wanted so much to be good at it. That's been the hard part over the five years, especially when I've done it to the exclusion of other things—not to be making my own records and not to be doing other things I could be doing.

Photo by Rick Mattingly

Photo by Joost Leijen

And then, after three years, I realized that, even though I'm taking these lessons, finding out all this stuff, and becoming more advanced, it doesn't mean that I'm going to be good at it. [laughs] I could do this stuff for ten years, but it doesn't mean I'm going to be good. So wait a minute! I had to start questioning a lot of things, and that was the hard part, because I know I want to be good at it. You want to do something, and if you can do it you want to be better, or better than average, or great! So I can learn this stuff and master it, but that doesn't mean that the product is going to be pleasing.

RM: Plus, you already have a reputation to live up to, whereas if I wanted to compose, for instance, no one would be expecting as much from me.

TW: That's part of it too; that's exactly what I mean. But the music we did last summer with V.S.O.P. was good for me because I had two of my pieces in the set, and it gave me the chance to have the music I'd recently written played by that caliber of players. Those guys are great.

RM: I recall a quote from an earlier interview where you were talking about musicians you admired. You said that the thing they all had in common was a personal sound.

TW: Yeah, they have a way of playing. You can tell one musician from another by their sound. That's what jazz is about. That's what most music is about.

RM: Regarding your own way of playing, what would you say is the link between your drumming with such groups as Lifetime, the Great Jazz Trio, V.S.O.P., Stanley Clarke, and Ronnie Montrose? Some people might hear those musics and it would not even occur to them that it was the same person playing drums. What do you think are the things about your style that are consistent in all of those situations?

TW: I would think that it would be the strength, the consistency and the time. In all those different bands and in all those different things that I do play, I'm always trying to express the time.

RM: There's also a certain energy that comes through all of those situations. This drummer isn't laid-back. This is someone who plays the drums and means it. To me, that came through just as well with the Great Jazz Trio as it did with Lifetime.

TW: It's an aggressiveness too, and the willingness to be a part of it. I'm not playing a role. That's what I always strive for: Whatever style I play, I *play* the style rather than *attempt* to play. It's two different sounds. You can hear when jazz drummers *attempt* to play rock, or rock drummers *try* to play jazz. It's not quite there. You have to really work at that.

RM: When you play rock, you don't sound like a jazz drummer trying to play rock. You sound like a rock drummer.

TW: That comes from the aggressiveness. But I must say that it also comes from my training in jazz, because it seems to me that playing jazz gives a drummer more sensitivity for the drumset and much more of a rounded concept. It's hard to explain that without someone feeling like I'm trying to say that 1 want them to play jazz. I'm not. I'm saying, "What I want you to do is play the drums better." It just so happens that, if you learned a lot about jazz, practiced for two or three years and really tried to be good at it, you would become a better drummer. Drummers spend a long time not feeling good on their instruments because of the things they don't want to do. Everyone has prejudices and fears. But anyone with experience knows that if you do take a couple of years to study something, several years later you will be very glad that you spent that amount of time improving yourself. Sometimes you don't realize how much good something has done you until years later.

RM: Another thing that probably influenced your rock playing was that you grew up with rock tunes. I believe you once said that, when you were with Miles Davis, you had a Beatles poster

on your wall at home.

TW: Yeah, when I was with Miles, I was 17. The Beatles are all older than me. So why would people find it odd that I like that music? When I was growing up, I would watch *American Bandstand* when I came home from school. I was leading two lives. I played with guns and holsters right up until I was about 14, and I joined Miles when I was 17.

RM: So I guess the question should not be how could you play rock, but what were you doing playing with people like Miles?

TW: Right. Yeah. I think I had a very full childhood. My childhood lasted into my 20's, believe me. I'm still trying to shake a lot of it. But I didn't miss anything.

RM: Lifetime was the group which seemed to lead you back to rock. This is something I read in a review once and I thought I'd ask you about it.-The reviewer said, "It must have been galling for Williams to watch everyone else making money out of fusion knowing that his band, Lifetime, was among the seminal crossover bands." Do the people who set the direction necessarily reap all of the rewards?

TW: Of course not. But then, I don't see anybody making a lot of money. I'm not sure who they are talking about.

RM: Groups like the Mahavishnu Orchestra, Return To Forever, all the way up to the Pat Metheny Group have maybe benefited from the seeds you planted.

TW: Well, that's nice to hear.

RM: In fact, I would say the popular opinion is that you were one of the founders of fusion, crossover, or whatever you want to call it. Do you not see it that way yourself? People sometimes have a different view of themselves. Where do you see yourself in history, or do you even think about that?

TW: I try not to. I mean, I do, but I try not to also. It's kind of second-guessing yourself. I've been guilty of that sometimes, and I don't like doing that. On those first records with Lifetime, or even those early Blue Note records, I was just trying to do something that no one else had done. I had been hearing things that other people had done and I thought, "Wow, if they can do *that,* then I can do *this."* That's how it came about. The problem I had was that I didn't think about money. If I'd had that in mind, things might have been different. The music might not have been what it was. I don't know. If I had thought about money, I might have gotten involved with studio work, or gone in some other direction. But I wasn't involved in watching other people make money;

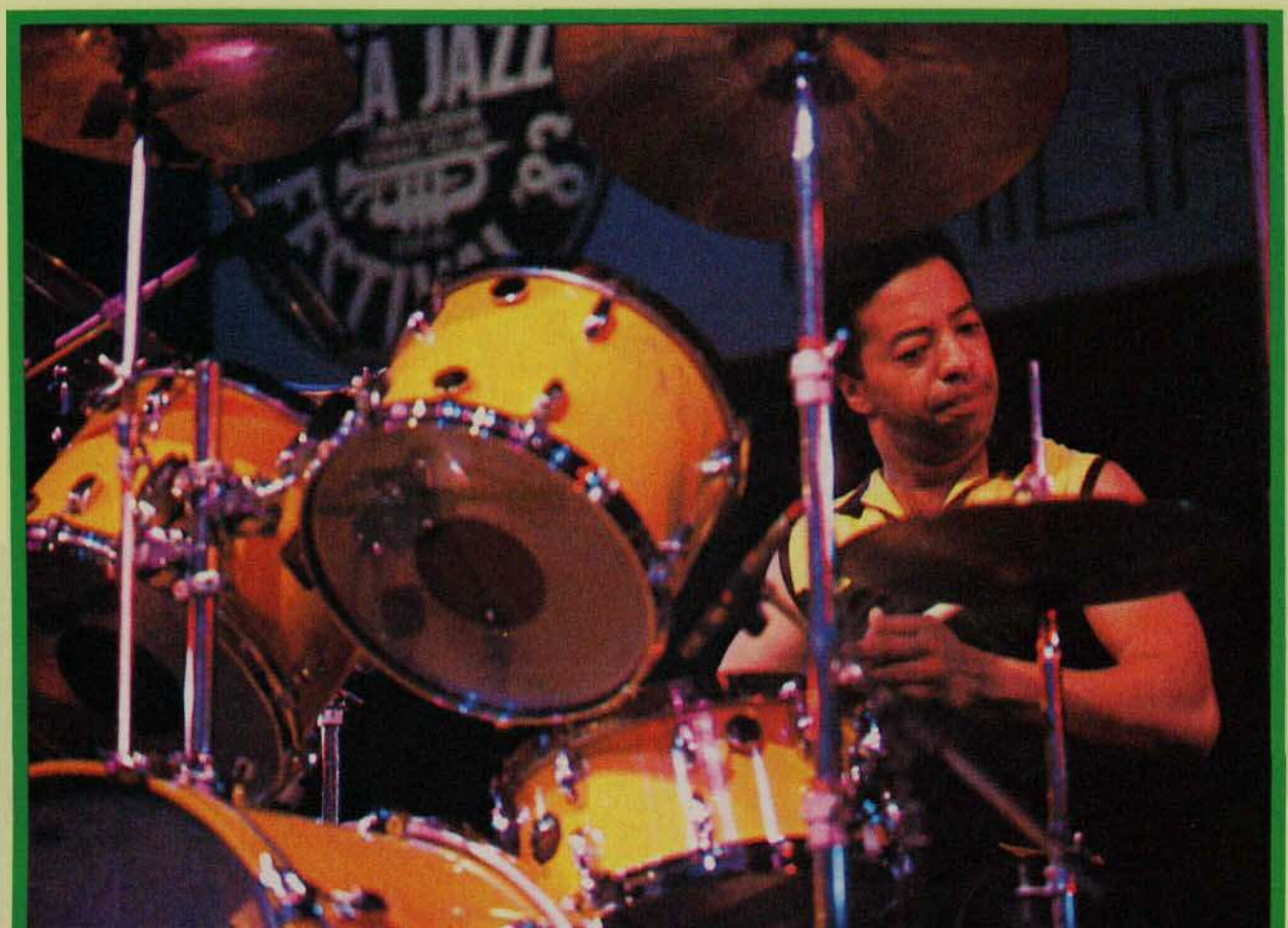


Photo by Joost Leijen

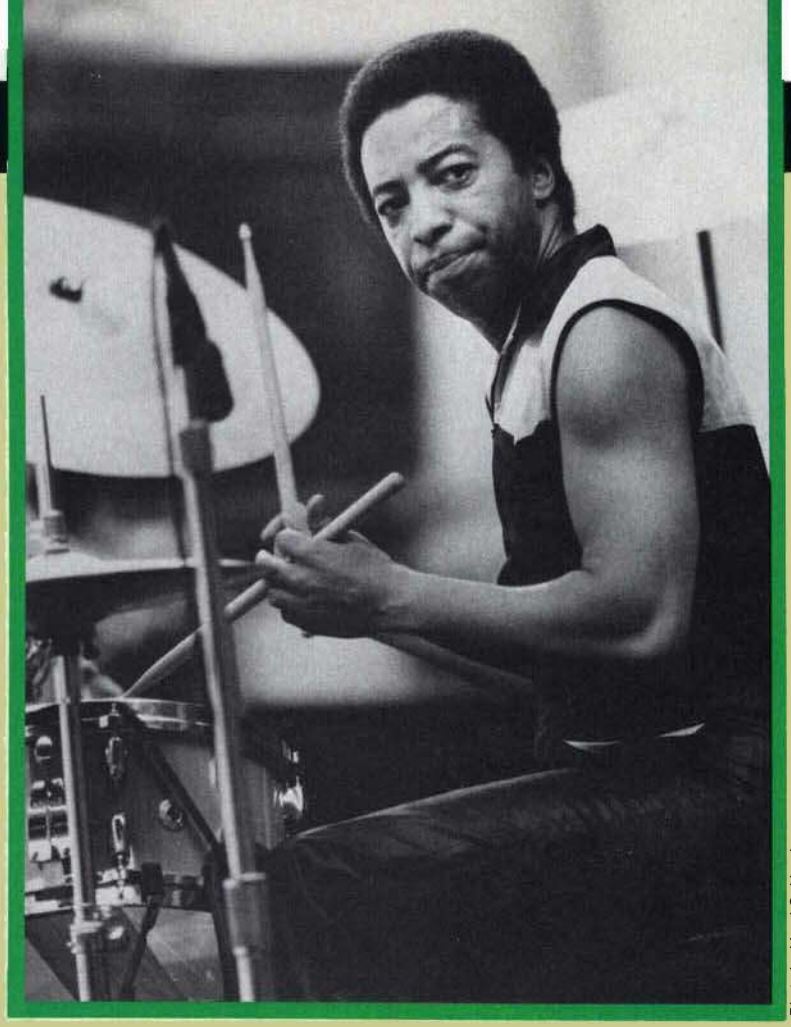


Photo by Veryl Oakland

I just wanted to work. That's been the major thing that's been frustrating—the fact that I wanted to work, and I wanted to play. Like anyone else, when I was a kid, I thought that all I had to do was be the best at what 1 did, and everything would be okay. But I found out that it wasn't that way. It was very confusing.

RM: You once said in an interview that no one could look at your career, and then accuse you of doing things just to make money.

TW: Yeah. Everything I've done, I've done because I enjoyed doing it. Also, I didn't want to repeat what I had already done. The reason that Miles' band was so wonderful was because it was fresh. When you ask people to do the same thing year after year, it is no longer fresh. If I want that spark again, in myself, then I have to go on to something else. I have to find a fresh kind of thing that I'll want to get up there and do. Another thing: What's wrong with money? Money is o-kay. [laughs]

RM: Do people ever ask you to duplicate something that they heard you do before?

TW: Yeah, I get that a lot, and that's why 1 don't do a lot of records. Many times when people call me, they're not really interested in something new. They're interested in something they've heard before, and they want to duplicate that. That's okay, but what I play is a reaction to what is going on around me, and it really feels good and genuine when it happens. I wouldn't play the way I played with Cecil Taylor behind Blossom Dearie, or Hank Jones, or Laurie Anderson. When I play with someone, I have to play the drums in a way that will sound good with *that* music, and be a part of that music. So when someone asks me to play something without any inspiration, I can do it. It's easy to simply duplicate something, but it's not fun. I get excited by having other musicians around who are playing really great stuff. In that situation, I can play what the music calls for.

RM: It's possible that the reason they liked what you did originally was because of the spontaneity, but they're trying to recapture that by having you duplicate the licks.

TW: Right, but it's not the licks that are important. It's the atmosphere of spontaneity, and the things that are playing off of each other that cause other things to happen.

RM: It seems that a lot of people try to imitate your licks and technique.

TW: When I was a kid, for about two years I played like Max Roach. Max is my favorite drummer. I don't know if I've ever said this clearly and plainly, but Max Roach was my biggest drum idol. Art Blakey was *myfirst* drum idol, but Max was the biggest. So I would buy every record I could find with Max on it and then I would play exactly like him—exactly what was on the record, solos and everything. I also did that with drummers like Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, Jimmie Cobb, Roy Haynes, and all of the drummers I admired. I would even tune my drums just like they were on the record. People try to get into drums today, and after a year, they're working on their own style. You must first spend a long time doing everything that the great drummers do. Then you can understand what it means. I've found that not only do you learn how to play something, but you also learn *why* it was played. That's the value of playing like someone. You just can't learn a lick. You've got to learn where it came from, what caused the drummer to play that way, and a number of things. Drumming is like an evolutionary pattern.

"WHAT I PLAY IS A REACTION TO WHAT IS GOING ON AROUND ME."

RM: Young drummers today are naming you as an influence. What do you hope they are getting from you?

TW: I hope that what they get from me is what I got from the people who influenced me. I would like to be able to give off the same things that inspired me to really love the instrument and love music. That was one of the things that impressed me when I was a child and saw these people who I thought were great. One of the things I noticed was that they inspired others. If you can do that, *that's* a lot.

RM: We were talking before about hearing somebody and saying, "That's a jazz drummer trying to play rock," or "That's a rock drummer trying to play jazz." I remember a comment Buddy Rich made once when somebody was described to him as being a good big band drummer. He said, "That's stupid. You're either a good drummer or you're not. If you're a good drummer, you play the drums in *any* situation."

TW: Exactly. That's the problem that I see with people in certain bands—especially rock bands. These drummers come up and they've only played in one band, and people are calling them really great drummers. "I see. Okay. Let me see you play behind Sarah Vaughan one night, Lawrence Welk the next night, Mickey Gilley the following night, and Prince the night after that. Then I'll tell you how good a drummer you are." For me, that's drumming. That's how I was raised. I'm tired of these drummers who can't play rolls. They can't even play double-stroke rolls smoothly. These people are famous drummers making a lot of money. I don't be-

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JOHN "WILLIE" WILCOX

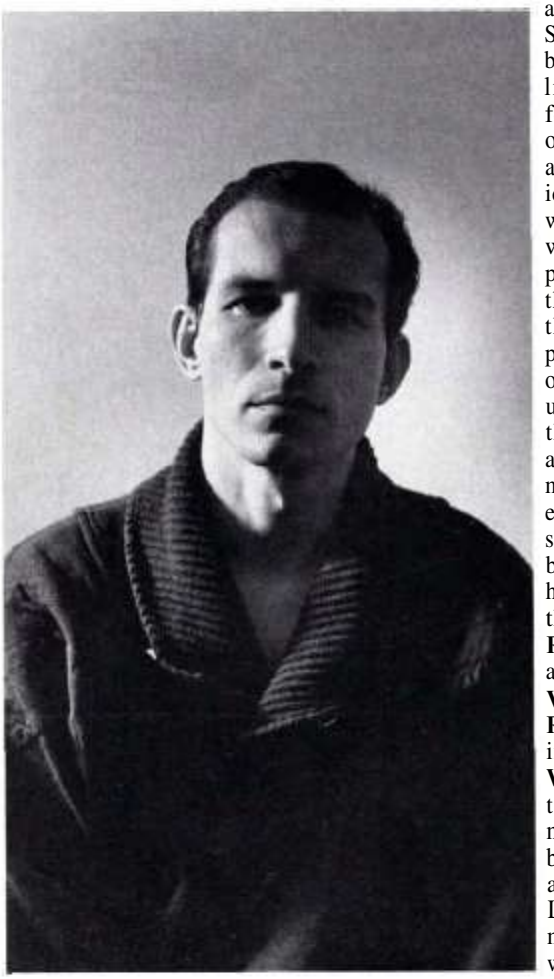


Photo by Rick Mattingly

Musicians Make The Best Drummers

by Robyn Flans

I'm really anti-drum in a sense. Obviously you need facility and technique, but I subscribe to music, *"states Utopia's Willie Wilcox. He has spent recent years becoming a total musician, developing his talents as producer, singer and songwriter, within the band and independently.*

But Willie spent his early years concentrating on the facility and technique. Raised in the small town of Glens Falls, New York, Wilcox, at 13, was fortunate in finding his first teacher, Freddie Blood. In addition to delivering newspapers, Willie worked in Blood's drum shop, learning to repair and clean drums in exchange for free lessons. One of his earliest highlights occurred when Gene Krupa, a friend of Blood's, came to town and the three spent some time together. That same night, Krupa performed in town and called both Wilcox and Blood to the stage, relinquishing his drums to Willie while Blood took over the percussion and the two guests played a number with Krupa's band.

"When you're a baby, somebody has to take enough interest to help you believe in yourself during the period when you're so fresh that you don't know what to believe. Freddie did that."

After Blood instilled the love of jazz in his student, Willie went on to Berklee and the Manhattan School of Music to further his education. There came a point, however, when he realized it was the practical playing experience he craved. And he has been getting this experience ever since with such artists as Hall & Oates, Bette Midler and Utopia. For the consummate musician, his current situation with Utopia is ideal since he is afforded plenty of time to work on his other areas of musical interest. Recently he moved from Florida to be closer to New York, the hub of the music business.

While Wilcox is cognizant of the fact that the music sometimes becomes a business, he has developed certain philosophies and perspectives on the less than positive aspects. Mere contemplation and understanding of the situation are positive traits, both of which are evident in the following interview. Our conversation took place in upstate New York during the making of Utopia's Oblivion *album, which was released earlier this year.*

RF: Since you're in the midst of recording a new album, let's talk about Utopia's recording process. How much overdubbing is involved?

WW: All the Utopia things had been done live until this present record. The method with this album, so far, seems to be that we lay down the basic form of the tune, instrumentally. Then I go back and put down my ultimate drum track, and they overdub to that. The other times we all played the track and waited until everybody as a band got the take that they liked. This time, we fell into this sort of pattern. It wasn't discussed. We just started doing it. I actually like it in a way. It gives us a chance to think about it a little bit, especially since most of the tracks that we put down aren't songs when we start. They're just tracks with no lyrics or melodies. For instance, on this new album, we don't have any idea what we're going to do.

RF: Is that typical?

WW: That happens, but we also work sometimes with completed songs. Somebody will come in with a track or a completed song, and we just put it together and see how it comes out. This time, we only have a month to do the album, and so far, we've been doing a track a day, writing it and recording it. We're doing pretty well. Somebody will have an idea, then somebody else will have another part and we link them together. It makes the songs different because they're not conceived at once and they're not conceived so much in a style. We can take any kind of musical idea and turn it into something else. The whole attitude could change depending on what sounds are used on it, how it's played, at what tempo and other things. I thought I had two pieces of material for the album, each being its own separate piece, but the band only liked certain parts of each one of them, so it ended up that I used a verse from one and the chorus from the other. That's one thing that's different about writing for the band, and writing for myself or other people. We all have different musical styles, and a lot of times, the style that you may do naturally might not be totally right for the band. There are, however, certain parts of your style that the band can use.

RF: Or they can use what you've written and make it into their own style.

WW: Right. "Utopiaize" it.

RF: Continue with how you actually work in the studio.

WW: We play the arrangement live and get that down. Then we play with the drum machine. We've been using the Linn lately, but we have an Oberheim too. I go back and get the drum track really tight with the Linn. Then 1 get a chance to think about my part a little more and exactly what I want to do. I start to realize the different changes in the song. When you're a studio musician, a lot of times you don't get to hear the song, which is a big complaint. It's like, "God, if I would have known that this was the bridge leading into the chorus of this section, or if I would have heard that melody, I would have done something totally different." The way we do it, even though 1 haven't heard the lyrics yet or the melodies, at least 1 get a chance to sense what the flow of the tune is, and play something I will be happier with later.

RF: How do you feel about the synthesized computer drums?

WW: I think it's really starting to get exciting. I'm not at all threatened or put off by synthesized drums. Now that they're digi-

Photo by Ebet Roberts

tally sampling all these sounds, it's great. For a drummer to be able to play in real time and store this information in the drum machine, is great, but it needs to be expanded. When they get to disc storage, it will even be easier. I want to do it for recording possibilities. Live, there is a lot to do also. When you're working with a machine, you've got to play with the machine, so it's going to involve playing with a click track, live, but I love doing that. I've been doing that for a long time anyway, since I started playing with the metronome years ago and doing the Utopia albums when we used a drum machine. I'd play along and practice playing solos with these things, so it's not foreign to me. It's something that I think is valuable for new players to learn how to do.

RF: How is it being part of a band that seems pretty democratic?

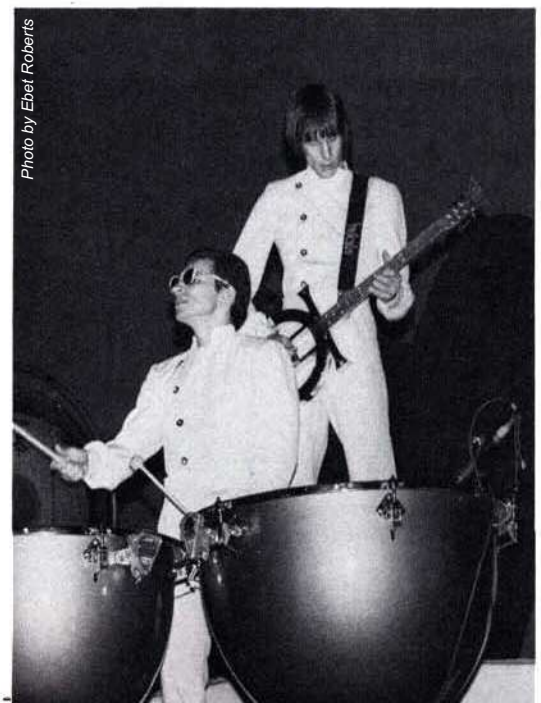
WW: It's always been sort of Todd Rundgren and Utopia, but we've tried to be as democratic about the situation as humanly possible. Todd was a successful solo artist before the band formed, but the rest of us weren't. So the band, through the last seven years, has become Utopia. But through it all, we had to deal with a lot of people saying "We want to hear Todd as a solo artist." Even the record company, Bearsville, was interested in Todd only as a solo artist and not that crazy about the band. But Todd always had a strong allegiance to the band and believed in the band. When you deal with yourself, you set up all your own goals and parameters, and you create your own environment. When you're in a band situation, you have to exchange with other people and that automatically puts you in another position. Specifically in Todd's case, on his solo records, he plays almost everything himself, so when he is in the band situation, he not only has the benefit of the expertise of other members in the band, but also of other minds and other feelings to react with. That in itself is a benefit of playing in a band. Plus, in this band, he doesn't sing all the time, because we all sing lead vocals and backgrounds. We all take different solos and share the spotlight in different periods of the show and on the records. So the pressure isn't on him all the time to be the main focus.

RF: You've done some sessions. What do you perceive as being the difference between that and being a member of a band?

WW: The big difference between being a studio player and a band member is that, after seven years, everybody kind of has a trust for everyone else, in that we have the freedom to play the parts we want to play. If somebody is not crazy about a part, that person will say, "Try doing this," or "I don't like this." Your idea is like your baby, and when somebody is commenting about your baby, it's natural to have a strong reaction to it. You can express that feeling in any situation, but it always feels more severe in the studio situation where an artist is making a solo record and a producer is trying to produce the song as best as possible. The producer has hired these musicians, wants to hear this and has got to get this thing to happen. The whole thing is based around money, finances, deadline and budget. At the same time, the producer is saying, "Listen, we've got to cut these tracks as fast as possible because we have a budget to stick to. I want to get great takes. Just be relaxed, and be creative. Ready? Go." It gets to be a very uncreative situation. Utopia has its own studio, so we can sit in there for three hours and not figure out something. After being in a band for so long, I've been involved in the production aspects of all the Utopia records, and I have a lot to say about what happens on the record. Studio musicians can't do that, but I find that I can't keep quiet. I don't mouth off, but I'll approach playing the drums like a producer. I can bring the same experiences to the song as a producer. I think that's the big difference between a studio player and a person who has been a member of a band and a producer. When I first started playing sessions, I would just wait for the producer to tell me what to do. I thought my function as drummer was to be able to play any style of music well, so if somebody asked me to do something, I could do it. That was my challenge. But now, I'm more concerned with what's right for the music and creating the best part. Instead of the producer saying, "I'd like to hear this or this," I'd like to be able to sit down and play something that is creative and right for the tune. The producer may say, "Do this," and I'll say, "Yeah, I can do that, but you should think about this because this will have a great effect." I can bring a lot more to the session than just playing the licks other people want to hear. That has its place too. I think when you're a studio player, that's your job. You're there to provide a service for those people. They want to hear what makes them happy. If what makes them happy is what you do on your own, then that's fantastic. You have to find the balance in between all that.

Photo by Rick Mattingly

Photo by Ebet Roberts

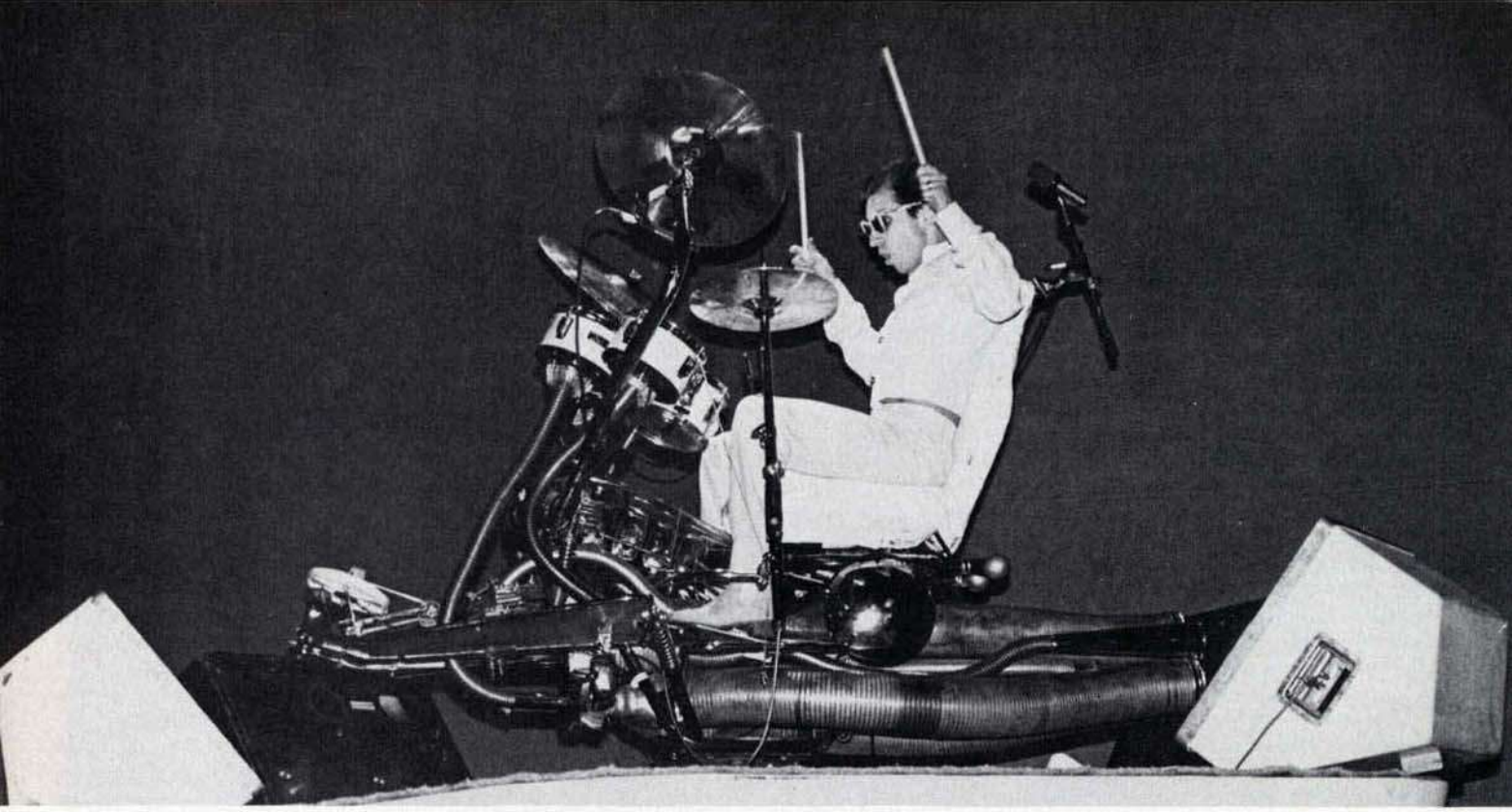


Then it gets to this whole other level which is the psychological trip that is played. Everybody is a professional, but beyond the professional, personalities start to enter into the situation. I think it's important for young, aspiring drummers to realize that there is a lot to consider. Aspiring drummers worry about their fills and their time. They become so preoccupied with asking themselves questions about their performance, but a lot of times they're doing what they should be doing. There might be other musicians, though, who are doing what they *shouldn't* be doing and those people use other people as psychological whipping boards for their frustrations. They can all be very professional people. It happens at every level, but the inexperienced people automatically think, "What have I done wrong? What's the matter with me?" I found out through the years that there's a lot more going on in these incredibly complicated human beings than just what meets the eye in terms of the music. I think it's important to realize that you should always be aware of how well you do with your craft, but at the same time be aware that you're not always at fault for things that go on.

RF: You almost have to be as much of a psychologist as you do a musician.

WW: Absolutely. I remember playing at a club when I was younger with two guys who were much older than me. They were pretty good players and would always say, "Watch the time." They were so into that

Photo by Ebet Roberts



kind of stuff that I would go home crying. I wanted to do so well, but somebody was always mentioning something about something. It was really traumatic at that early period when 1 really aspired to be successful at what I did and wanted my peers to accept me. That was a rough period. There seem to be all these different levels of escalation along the road, but they always lead to the same place. Whenever you get to one level, you're still approaching a new level. The approach is exactly the same once again, even though you always thought, "Once I make it. . ." I always said 1 had to make it by the time I was 18.1 got to be 18 and 1 said, "Well, I'll give it until I'm 21. So what if Tony Williams was a star at 19?" But priorities change as you go along and the goals change. One of the hardest things for me was when I was knocking around in clubs. Then 1 got into the Hall & Oates thing, and then the Bette Midler thing. Finally when I got into Utopia, that was an achievement I had wanted to accomplish: being in a successful pop band that had wide recognition. 1 got there and I enjoyed it for a certain period of time. Then, all of a sudden, I got to that level and said, "Okay, here I am. I've made more money than 1 ever made, I've gotten some attention and I've started to develop as a writer, a player, a singer and a performer. Now what?" And now there's another transition; it's like starting all over again. When I was younger, I thought, "If

"ONE OF THE THINGS I ENJOY DOING THE MOST IS WORKING WITH OTHER ARTISTS AND MAKING THEM BE THE BEST THAT THEY CAN BE."

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Photo by Rick Mattingly

TRIS IMBODEN

"This gives me more than what I would expect from a drummer because he also gives me attitude," Kenny Loggins told me when I asked what he needed from a drummer. "Tris' attitude can hold the band together during times when morale might slip. Say, for example, you're playing a lousy gig at a state fair where there's lousy food, the people are treating you badly and the dressing rooms are terrible. His attitude can keep everybody up. And his attitude on stage is always as strong as a human being can give you. He's up more than any person I've ever known. Also, the main thing for me is that I can't work with a drummer who is not steady—who lets the groove slip around too much. When I was doing the Alive *album, we could edit a verse from one year and the chorus from another. His tempos would be exactly the same to the 10th of a second. I've never worked with anybody who is that precise. When he finds a pocket, he holds it, and he'll hold it from year to year. The amazing thing is, if I need him to speed up the song or slow down the song, he can do that for me and will do that if I ask him to. He never fights me. Most other drummers I've had occasion to work with get something set in their heads and will try to talk me out of my wanting to make a change in tempo. We have hand signals on stage that we also use in the studio, so he and I can read each other quickly. If I need a cymbal crash, he's right there with me. If I want him to change the dynamics of a tune in a way we've never done before on stage, he'll go with me. He'll change the dynamics to a whisper, or play something with punches, or do a complete break. It sounds like I'm talking about a trained puppy or something, but the fact of the matter is he's a writer's dream because he's an extension of my musical moods. With a drummer like Tris, the music can be fresh every night because we can rearrange it according to the mood of the music and where it wants to go, or according to my mood and where I want to go. Sometimes the music is in charge and sometimes I am."*

If I had given Kenny a script, he couldn't have said it better, for those were the very elements of Tris' playing and personality I would have pointed out. In everything he does, Tris aims to please. Watch him in concert and he gives 100%. If you observe him in the studio, as I have been fortunate enough to do, you will see a creative eagerness to contribute and a willingness to try anything. Spend time with him and his wife Celia, and their positive energy is contagious!

Always appreciative and considerate of those around him, Tris is quick to give credit to his drum tech, Dave Bowers, since Tris is sensitive to the fact that it takes more than just himself to achieve the level of perfection he strives for in both his studio and live playing.

While his main gig is with Loggins, Tris has become active in the L.A. studio scene as well. He has recorded for Gary Wright, Tom Snow, Don Felder, Jay Ferguson, and he has played live with Bob James and Firefall (as well as recording their Clouds Across The Sun *album), but then Kenny doesn't give him too much time off.*

"If and when I work with other drummers, it's only because I want to find out what else there is, but I always come back to Tris because he spoiled me," Loggins said. ' 'It's hard for me to imagine anybody else playing my music."

RF: Watching you in the studio, it sometimes makes me wonder how a recording drummer feels. It's such a bastard art, almost like a jigsaw puzzle instead of music.

TI: I think at times it can become that. It depends on the particular project, the producer, the artist's concept of the song and just musically how you approach it. In the case of what you just watched [Tris overdubbing Simmons on a new Loggins track, "Footloose"], we were going for a very mechanized sound, and in that instance, it was like a jigsaw puzzle because we'd add an extra track of bass drum with a particular sound, and then a Simmons piece of the puzzle here and there. But it's not always the case. As I said, it depends on the specific project. Other times you go in and just play with a band—a rhythm section.

RF: But isn't it rare to cut live anymore?

TI: Well, that's true. It seems to be sort of a lost art these days.

RF: Everyone complains about how hard it is to record live, but sometimes I think the overdubbing process is so much harder.

TI: Yeah, it's really exacting work. There's not much room for any breathing in the track that way. I get a different sort of satisfaction from both approaches, though. There's nothing like just getting that magic track live—particularly with the whole band. That's something that I really enjoy. But there's a certain expertise involved in being able to lay down those pieces of the puzzle with complete precision.

RF: When Kenny said, "You're going to be expected to do this in concert," 1 laughed because obviously you're not going to reproduce live what it took nine tracks to do on the record.

TI: It would be impossible.

RF: So what's the point?

TI: To me, these are two different canvases entirely. Studio is all based on illusion anyway. Instruments are made to sound way bigger than life—totally different from how you can get them to sound live. For a live situation I just approximate what I did in the studio.

RF: I walked in and saw the Simmons set, and I was wondering how you felt about playing the entire set?

TI: Right. You experienced that whole little mini-debate that Kenny and I had. [At one session, Kenny had suggested to Tris that he take only a Simmons setup on the road. Tris said he would prefer having some acoustic drums along with the Simmons.] On this last song that we did, I had done the basic track on acoustic drums that were triggered into the Simmons, so we had the combination. The overdubs were just the icing on the cake, and we chose to do those on the Simmons. I wouldn't mind playing all Simmons if the song required it. When it just comes to how I feel comfortable—the way I like to play—I don't think I could be comfortable playing only on a piece of plastic after 20 years of feeling the resonance, response and tone of an acoustic drum. There's just something infinitely satisfying about that. I think it's wonderful, though, to have both at your disposal. I'm not a purist when it comes to that.

RF: You really can't afford to be a purist in the studios.

TI: True. Plus, I genuinely like a lot of the electronic sounds that are available now. It's really a wide-open frontier that nobody's really messed with, and something that's really viable as an alternative—an accoutrement—and I dig it.

RF: Some drummers are having problems with their muscles aching because there's no response in the Simmons heads.

TI: Craig Krampf and I were talking about that today. He said that he'd been doing the Motels for 7'/2 months using almost exclusively Simmons. He'd wake up in the morning with cramps and aches and think, "Am I getting old? What's going on?" It took him a while to realize that it was caused by the Simmons. They don't give at all. I've also found that I break drumsticks more on them, and I use a beefy drumstick too.

RF: What do you use?

TI: I'm using the Pro-Mark 757 model, and they have a very thick neck.

RF: So you like the Simmons.

TI: Yeah, I do. I really do. I would just hate for them not to be explored, although I'm sure that's not going to happen. People like Bruford are exploring them and the guy who plays with Kitty-hawk apparently has been doing interesting things with real unu-

by Robyn Flans

Photo by Paul Jonason

Photo by Paul Jonason

sual Simmons settings. They really are infinitely adjustable and, man, you can get a host of real unique sounds. I haven't had time to really woodshed with the Simmons, because we got them and went directly on the road. I just had to gravitate immediately to what was going to work. With traveling and all, there really hasn't been time to sit down and see what these babies will do. But I'm looking forward to doing that when we have some time off.

RF: Like you said, there's an infinite amount of sounds. But what about the acoustic drum sound? Can you find that somewhere? Where is that anymore?

TI: Well, yeah, I know what you mean. On that song you heard us record before we went on tour, I was a bit miffed when I was told I couldn't use my acoustic toms, until I heard what they got with the Simmons—that exaggerated, pleasantly huge, acoustic tom sound. You'll hear it on the full mix. It's not to say that any well-tuned acoustic drum couldn't do the same thing. But the Simmons are capable of even doing acoustics or "acoustic-esque."

Photo by Rick Malkin

RF: You mentioned that you've been playing drums for 20 years. What initially sparked your interest?

TI: Well, as corny as this may sound, I still remember the day my dad took me to a Fourth of July parade in Huntington Beach when I was three years old. This marching band from Compton came down the street and the cadence that they were playing almost made me hysterical. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry; I just knew that that was something I had to check out. So from that point on I was always drawn toward drums. When I first tried to study music in school, it was in the fifth or sixth grade I guess, and there wasn't any room in the drum section at Huntington Beach Junior High, so 1 had to opt for trumpet until there was room in the drum section. But I did well with trumpet. I was second chair by the time a slot opened for a drummer, so then, of course, 1 shifted over. But prior to that I used a practice pad and sticks at home, where I'd work out to my favorite records.

RF: Was that training in school the extent of your formal study?

TI: Yeah, in fact, I really didn't pursue it in high school as far as what they offered there. I'm primarily self-taught, although I read.

RF: Did you teach yourself to read?

TI: No, that went back to my early training on trumpet. Also, when I shifted to drums I got some instruction in reading drum music. Then I just kind of carried on and put myself through a lot of books. One that really helped me, and one I'm sure everyone is familiar with, is *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer* by Jim Chapin. That was my bible for a long time. It helped to really loosen up my left hand, and to develop independence.

RF: How did you teach yourself?

TI: I always subconsciously—and consciously—assimilated what I heard from records. I think it was a plain old combination of emulation and real pointed study—breaking things down scientifically and trying to write them out if they were too difficult to just play.

RF: Who were some of the drummers that you were emulating at

that point?
TI: Well, my earliest influences were drummers like Krupa and Buddy, probably because my folks were into big band music. As a real small child, I really loved the early Dave Brubeck stuff too. I wore out the *Time Out* album and my folks had to buy quite a few copies. I was probably about six or so when I was listening to that.
RF: As time went on, what stirred you?
TI: Not until I got into Mitch Mitchell and Ginger Baker was I really copying people verbatim. I went through a period where I had to learn the solo from "Toad." In fact, I even had a Ludwig double bass drum set that was exactly the same as Ginger's, only 1 couldn't go all the way and have *silver* sparkle. I had champagne sparkle.
RF: How old were you?
TI: At that point I was in my senior year in high school, so I was 17 or 18.
RF: When did you start using double bass?
TI: That was right about that period. Once I heard Ginger, I did it. I haven't played double bass in many, many years, but now the DW double pedal affords me the opportunity to do that again without having my drum tech lug around another bass drum, or without becoming an engineer's nightmare because there's another bass drum on stage or in the studio.
RF: In retrospect, is there anything you wished you had worked on as a kid?
TI: Absolutely. Rudiments. Like a lot of young drummers, I wanted nothing to do with a practice pad and a book; 1 wanted to go right to a drumset. Now, in retrospect, I really see the importance of rudiments. I have to go back now, break some old habits, and really learn certain things that I had just ignored. I also wish I had actively pursued someone to study with at an early age. Now, I'm really thinking of doing it.
RF: What was the first professional gig you had?
TI: I was playing professionally in high school in a band called The Other Half. We did a lot of sock hops and that sort of thing, but our claim to fame was when we played the Teenage Fair in Hollywood. We played at the Standell and Vox booths, but at one point, they banned us from playing at the Standell booth because it was right at the entrance. We were so popular and people dug it so much that we clogged the whole entrance. Before that, I played in a few surf bands. Then, of course, the first thing I did after high school was gravitate right to the drums professionally and I've been doing it ever since. Right out of high school I was asked to join a band called Honk. The first album we did was a soundtrack for a surf film called *Five Summer Stories.* It was a very, very big surf flick, and in fact, at one point it was the biggest box office grosser of any 16mm film. In Hawaii we had a number-one hit off that album called "Pipeline Sequence," which was an instrumental. It was a pretty hip track for the time because I got to commit some jazz crimes on it. It really put us on the map locally. There were two albums after that, and they both were critically liked but never got that much attention nationally. The last album we did was really ahead of its time. There was just one horn player, and it had a lot of things you see happening now. We were very eclectic in our influences and drew from a lot of things—jazz, folk, and of course, serious rock.
RF: Was the record with Honk your first recording experience?
TI: Oh, absolutely.
RF: Can you recall what that was like?
TI: I sure can. In fact I almost became suicidal after hearing the first playbacks. As a young drummer you go in thinking you're burning, and then you hear the playback and realize, "Whoa, coming around that corner it rushed, and it dragged over here."
RF: Recording is a whole different thing.
TI: It sure is. It was real painful for me to come to terms with recording because I never liked anything that I did. I always heard the flaws. It's only now that I can listen to those old Honk records and enjoy them for what was there, instead of cringing.
RF: How did you learn to play in the studios? What things did you have to really concentrate on?
TI: I just had to listen, no matter how much it hurt, to see where my

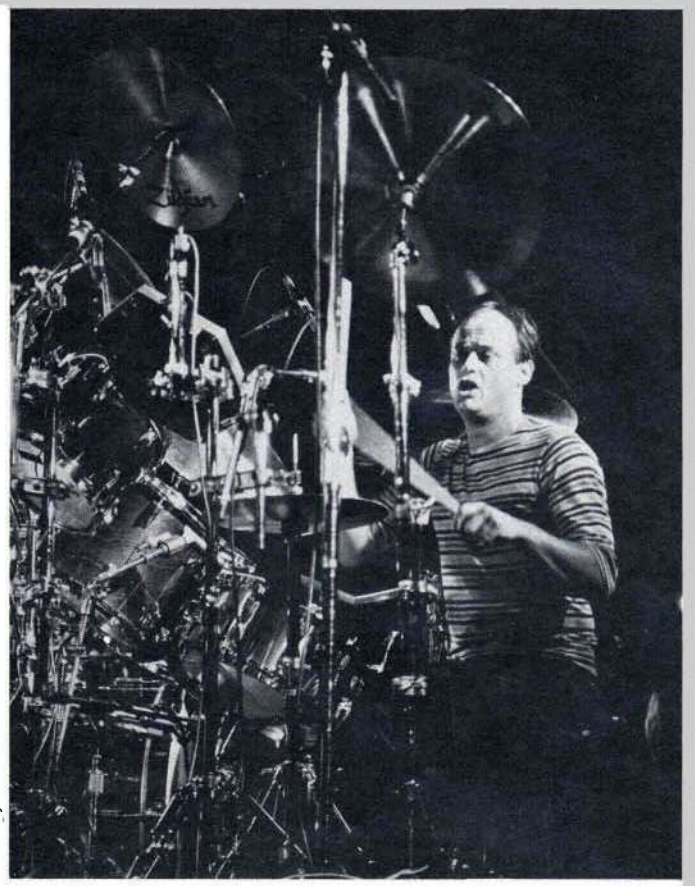
Photo by Rick Malkin

tendency was to rush, lay back, or drag, or where the sweet spot was on my drum and what sounded best.
RF: Even the tension that you hit with.
TI: Yeah, exactly, whether to play out of the drum or to dig in—I consciously looked at all those things, and made an effort to find what sounded best on tape and on the drums.
RF: It's interesting that back in the late '60s and early '70s, when things were not as technical as they are today, four kids from Compton, California, could go into the studio and make a record, and it could be a hit. I wonder if young musicians today have the opportunity that you had to learn in the studio.
TI: Yeah, that's really true. I did have the benefit of that. During that particular period of time, if you wanted to take it seriously, you could cut your teeth while you were cutting a record.
RF: Nowadays, if you can't cut it in the studio during that first

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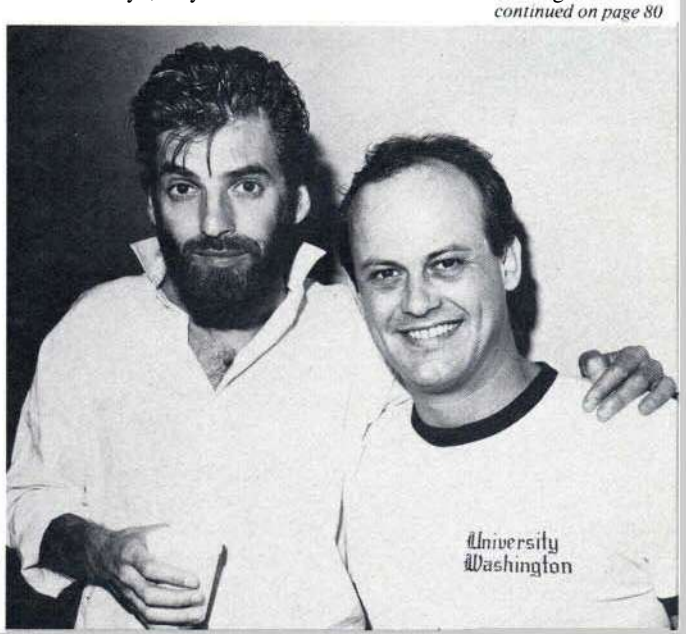

Photo by Rick Malkin

BEV BEV

REBORN

These days Bev Bevan is a particularly happy man. He sits in front of a color TV, minus the sound, in his hotel room a good two dozen stories above the streets of Manhattan and cracks a slight, almost hushed grin. On the other side of the room a friend of his recalls the ovation Bevan received after his rousing solo the previous night at the Meadowlands across the river in New Jersey.

For over ten years the drummer of the incredibly successful Electric Light Orchestra, more commonly known as ELO, Bev Bevan has now found another band in which to play drums—Black Sabbath. The decision to go on the road with Sabbath has been one of the most important decisions Bevan has had to make since joining Roy Wood and Jeff Lynne, and forming ELO back in 1971. Drumming with Black Sabbath has re-energized a career that, just a little more than a year ago, looked as if it might be coming to an end.

It was then that Bevan, in the midst of preparing to go on holiday in Spain where he owns a house, agreed to do the European leg of the Black Sabbath tour in place of ailing drummer Bill Ward. For Bevan, it was the chance to play on a stage again, to go on the road and perform in front of people. It was something he might never have had the chance to do again with Electric Light Orchestra, if Jeff Lynne, the group's drivingforce, chiefsongwriter and main opponent of touring, had his way. So Bevan packed his bags and offhe went. No question about it, Bev Bevan is indeed a happy man because of it.

Bevan's career extends well beyond his

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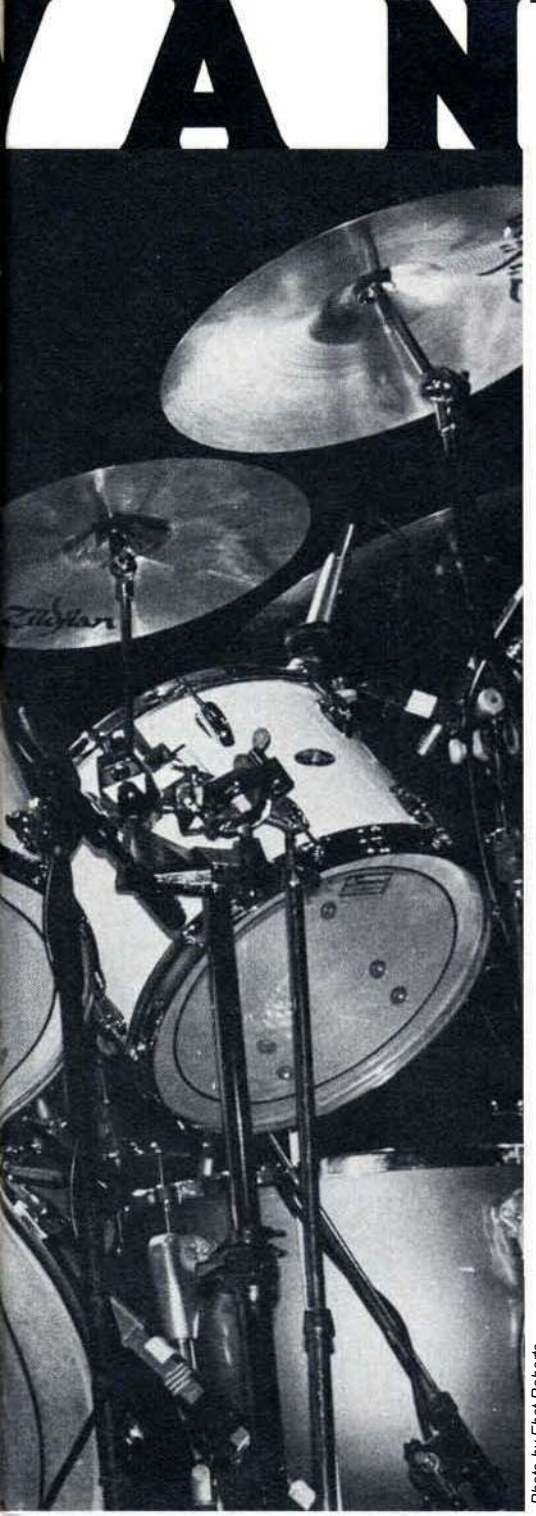


Photo by Ebet Roberts

by Robert Santelli

tenure as the drummer for Electric Light Orchestra. Before that, he played with the Move, a highly popular British band in the mid and late '60s that released cleverly crafted pop songs from albums that oozed with eclectic experimentation. Bevan had come to the Move from outings with numerous bands in the Birmingham area, among them, Carl Wayne & the Vikings, and Denny Laine & the Diplomats. Bevan's drum style in these bands could be categorized as energetic, authoritative, and even frenzied at times. In short, it was a far cry from the way he played with the Electric Light Orchestra on some ten albums and numerous world tours. During our conversation Bevan explained the reason behind his change in drum styles, elaborated on his role with Black Sabbath, and talked about why ELO is, most likely, a dead issue.

RS: Let's start off by talking about how you came to join Black Sabbath.

BB: Well, let's see. I got a telephone call totally out of the blue from Tony Iommi, Black Sabbath's guitar player and an old friend of mine, before the band went on its European tour last year. Tony asked me if I would help the band out and fill in for Bill Ward, Sabbath's drummer, who had just completed Born Again, the band's new record, but didn't feel up to the rigors of touring. So I said, "Yeah, I'd love to. Why don't you bring me over a tape of the new album." As soon as I heard the material on the album, I really loved it. I've always been a big fan of Sabbath, as well as a big fan of Deep Purple, and with Ian Gillan joining the group, it really excited me because it sort of combined the two. Besides, like I said, the music on Born Again appealed to me very, very much.

RS: How did you prepare yourself to go on the road with Black Sabbath on such short notice?

BB: Every day before we left, I would spend time with a pair of drumsticks and the tape, and just sort of bang away. There was a lot to learn, as you might imagine. There was so much old stuff, and then of course, there was the material from the Born Again album. Some of the arrangements were really quite complex, too. Bill Ward played real well on the Born Again album, but he just wasn't physically together to tour and carry on with the daily activities of being in a band. It's a shame, really.

RS: Going on the road can certainly be a strain on a person.

BB: I know, and that worries a lot of people—friends of mine, my wife. But I've never been into drugs. I've always been into sports: soccer, squash, tennis. Actually, squash is my game. Sports have kept me pretty sane over the years, I'm glad to say.

RS: Was it difficult for you to make the transition from ELO to Black Sabbath?

BB: I think it was fairly easy to adjust because the guys in the band are quite easy to get along with. I've known Tony for a long time.

RS: Did you have to alter the way you play drums in order to fit into the Black Sabbath scheme of things?

BB: Yeah, I would have to say so. I sort of switched back to the way I used to play. The way I'm playing now with Black Sabbath is really my true, natural style of drum playing—loud and heavy. I was brought up in Birmingham, England, along with such other drummers as John Bonham, Carl Palmer, Graeme Edge, Bill Ward and Cozy Powell. Birmingham, for some strange reason, produced that school of heavy, loud drummers. I also had to get back in shape; I had to get into the frame of mind of playing drums every day. Physically, I had to get myself up to doing that.

RS: If indeed that is your most "natural" way of playing drums, why didn't you play that way all the years you've spent with the Electric Light Orchestra?

BB: Well, with ELO I was very restricted in terms of my drumming. It didn't start out that way, actually. But over the years I've felt more and more restrained, and of course my drumming reflected it. See, the ELO material we recorded was so complex, not necessarily in the arrangements, but in the amount of stuff that actually went on the record by the time we were done recording it. There were usually so many instruments and so many things happening that the drumming simply had to be kept simple and uncomplicated. I was keeping time. That's about the bottom of it. I mean, that's all I was usually required to do—keep time and hold the whole thing together. When Tony phoned me, I asked him what sort of set Black Sabbath did. Well, he told me and he said I'd get to do a drum solo with the band. I said to him, "A drum solo! I haven't done a drum solo in ten years!" It took a while for me to get used to it. But I love doing it and I've begun to feel real confident again. Doing the solo is really a lot of fun, you see.

RS: Speaking of ELO, what's happening with the group now?

BB: Very little, actually. There's no touring planned, and I'm quite sure there never will be. At least I don't think there ever will be. There could be another album, however. And if there is, I'll probably play drums on it.

RS: Why won't ELO tour anymore?

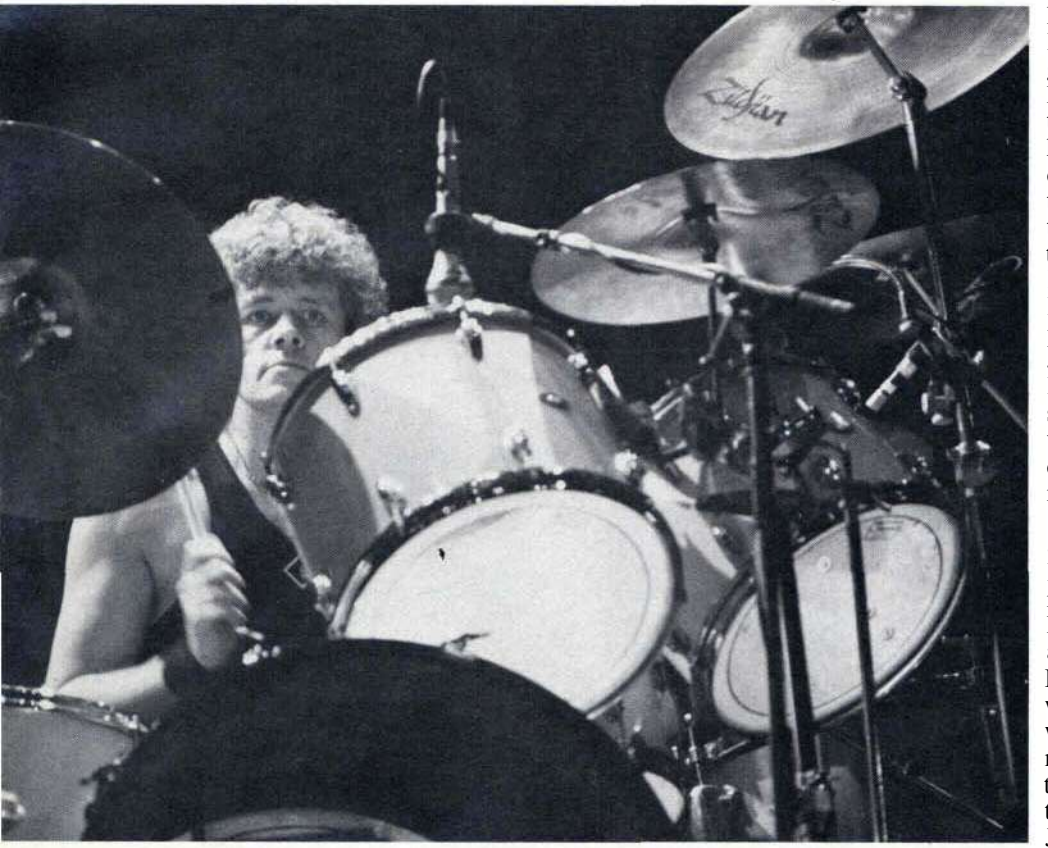
BB: Well, basically the band is led by Jeff Lynne, and he doesn't want to tour. It's as simple as that. I think the rest of the guys wouldn't mind touring. But I mean, Jeff never did like touring, and now he can actually afford not to do it if he doesn't want to.

RS: But you, obviously, enjoy touring and want to continue touring. Isn't that right?

BB: That's true, yes. For me, touring with Black Sabbath is a lot more fun than touring with ELO because I get to play a lot more. I'm actually a featured instrumentalist with Black Sabbath, whereas with ELO I wasn't. So, for my ego, this gig is much, much better, [laughs]

RS: Let's go back to the early days for a moment—before Electric Light Orchestra and before the Move—all the way back to your time spent as the drummer for Denny Laine & the Diplomats. There was one gig in the early '60s in which you guys opened for the Beatles. And after the show, Paul McCartney came backstage and congratulated you on your drum solo. Paul said to

Photo by Debbie Leavitt / PIX **Int'l.**



you something like, "Our drummer couldn't do that solo in 5/4 time like you did." How did you react to that compliment?

BB: That was during the height of Beatlemania, a long time ago. You couldn't hear anything they played, actually. It was just all screams. We were just struggling to break outside the Birmingham area at the time. We were playing local pubs, you see, and things like that. Opening up for the Beatles was really a big deal, as you might well imagine. And for any of the Beatles just to speak to us, let alone offer any sort of praise, why, that was enough to keep my head swelled for about six months.

RS: It didn't seem Paul thought too much of Ringo as a drummer by saying what he said.

BB: No, apparently not. And from what I've read, which has been a whole lot, about the Beatles, I get the impression Paul wasn't too fond of not only Ringo as a drummer, but also George Harrison as a guitarist.

RS: What did you think of Ringo as a drummer back then? Was he a big influence?

BB: Aside from the fact that he was in the most important band in the world and he was so visible, I liked Ringo's style because I thought it fit in just right with what the Beatles were doing at the time. But like I said, it didn't matter what he or anyone else in the band played live, because you couldn't hear anything anyhow. I even doubt, although I can't be certain, that he even thought much about his playing. Because later on, when I was playing with the Move, which sort of turned into a real teeny-bopper type of band in its later days, there'd be all kinds of crazy, screaming girls at our shows. It was a fact that you'd worry more about what you were going to wear rather than what you were going to play and how you were going to play it. So I can imagine that Ringo must have gotten caught up in that, too.

RS: Who were some of your early influences?

BB: My very first influence was Tony Meehan from the Shadows, an English group that never really caught on in the States, but were very popular in England. He was the only drummer whose name I actually knew. The Shadows was the first band I saw perform on television. There was no one to watch at the time and try to emulate. I used to buy a lot of jazz albums and listen to them. I got into Buddy Rich and Joe Morello. But that wasn't much help. I remember going to a Joe Morello drum clinic. The guy was absolutely brilliant. He demonstrated things like a one-handed roll that nearly made me want to give up playing the drums.

"DRUM MACHINES ARE GREAT; THEY CAN DO THINGS THAT HUMANS CANT POSSIBLY DO. BUT THERE'S NO SOUL TO THEM-NO SOUL WHATSOEVER."

RS: Going back to the Beatles one more time, I find it rather interesting that you had that experience with Paul in the days of Beatlemania, and then in the mid-'70s there was more than one critic who wrote that, if the Beatles had remained a band, they would sound very much like Electric Light Orchestra.

BB: That was a real compliment directed particularly at Jeff's songwriting, I think. Jeffs one big influence was definitely the Beatles, above all else. He would subconsciously ask me to play things like Ringo would have played them had he been the drummer for ELO. Or he'd say things to me like, "Try to sound like Ringo did on 'Strawberry Fields.' " So I think it's true about us sounding like the Beatles and the Beatles like us, if they were still together making records.

RS: That explains why you were essentially a timekeeper in ELO, doesn't it?

BB: Yes, it does. It got more and more that way, too. The last album, for instance, which was *Secret Messenger,* really pissed me off because there's a drum machine on that record, as well as me. You can be sure that it wasn't my idea to use one. I asked Jeff to credit the machine on the album so people knew it wasn't me playing, and he did that for me. Drum machines are great; they can do things that humans can't possibly do. But there's no soul to them—no soul whatsoever. Drum machines produce a very sterile sound.

RS: Compared to ELO, what are your recollections of the days you spent drumming with the Move?

BB: It was an incredibly full four years I spent with the group. We had about ten hit singles in Great Britain, and each one was so different in terms of style. We had a lot of personnel changes, too. We started out as a great band; this was even before we had a record deal. We were incredibly tight and had a really strong image with everyone wearing sort of gangster suits and guys up front sort of doing Motown dance steps and vocal harmonies. It was a real great band to play drums for. See, I had much more freedom and scope to do what I wanted to do. There was a period, like I mentioned before, where we got into a teeny-bopper type of thing with "Flowers In The Rain" and songs like that. We were overtaken by events, really. We were more thrilled, it seemed, with being on *Top Of The Pops* every week. I mean, we started off as sort of a progessive underground sort of band. But one thing the Move lacked was consistency.

RS: Which was the general reputation the band had here in the States.

BB: Exactly. I can't believe the following the Move still has here in the States, considering we never really sold very many records here. It's amazing. It really is. We started off the same time as Cream—al-

Photo by Ebet Roberts

most to the exact week. We started doing the same clubs. But Cream went one way—basically to America—and the Move stayed in England and became sort of a pop group. I guess that's the best way to put it.

RS: From a drummer's standpoint, was the transition from the Move to Electric Light Orchestra a dramatic one, not just technically speaking, but personally speaking as well?

BB: It just wasn't a whole lot of fun playing with a bunch of cellos and violins all the time. Sometimes they seemed to get in the way, if you ask me.

RS: I have to ask you: Why then did you stay with ELO, or even join it in the first place? It seems as if the band was everything you weren't, and vice versa.

BB: Well, I thought the idea of Electric Light Orchestra was one that really stood a good chance of making it in America—something the Move never accomplished. The Move did one tour of the States. That was in 1969. From that came what was probably the best Move album we ever did—*Shazam!* If we had persevered, we could have made it, but the heart had gone out of the band by then.

ELO, on the other hand, was exciting. It was such an unusual outfit. Playing with it would be a challenge, I thought. It really was a different kind of band.

RS: That explains why you joined the band, but it doesn't explain why you continued to stay with the band.

BB: I did sort of enjoy touring with ELO. When I got on the road I had more freedom in my playing. The times I felt most frustrated with the band were in the studio. I remember touring with Deep Purple. I would stand in the wings and watch Ian Paice play "Smoke On The Water." I'd say to myself, "Boy, I would love to have recorded that song."

One thing about touring and playing with ELO in its earlier days was that it was very difficult to hear everything that was going on. It got to where I'd just play with the bass player and guitarist, and just sort of hope the others were keeping time with me. It was a very confused period. But as we got into the third and fourth albums, we got pretty tight on stage. I really enjoyed the tours of America during those days. It was during the third album that we started using a big orchestra on record. It was something like a 40-piece orchestra—really quite big. It sort of mellowed our sound on record. But as a performing band we usually kept it down to around seven people. I personally think we peaked as a band around the time of *A New World Record.* The band was really quite good about that time. After that it got a little bit out of hand. I mean, we did the spaceship tour in 1978, which was a brilliant spectacle and amazing visual thing. But it wasn't much fun in terms of playing. We were stuck inside that spaceship and the sound was really bad. I always got a lot of bounce back. It was also very hard to establish some sort of rapport with the audience be-

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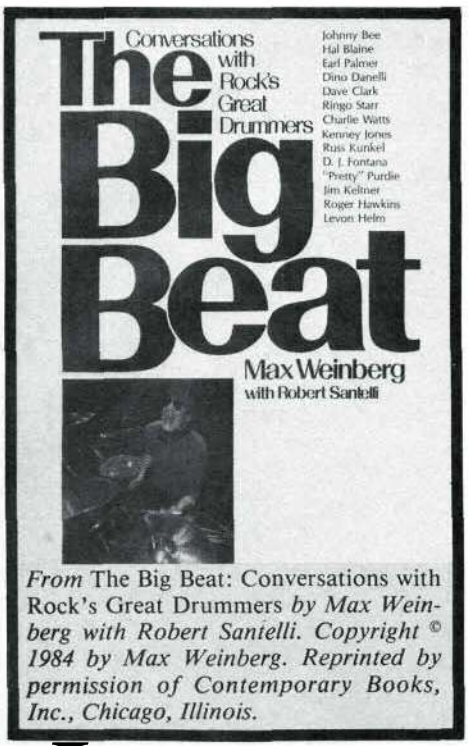
DINO D



From The Big Beat: Conversations with Rock's Great Drummers *by Max Weinberg with Robert Santelli. Copyright © 1984 by Max Weinberg. Reprinted by permission of Contemporary Books, Inc., Chicago, Illinois.*

LIKE THE DETROIT WHEELS and the Righteous Brothers, the Young Rascals were raised on rhythm & blues, and during the sixties, they played out their influences as blue-eyed soul. The Rascals were the most successful of all these groups. Above everything else, they were known as hot musicians, and their drummer, Dino Danelli, was one of the best in popular music. In his native New Jersey, he was a legend. There he got his first taste of the rock & roll life. His hometown, Jersey City, faces east, and any musician knows that to make it on the East Coast, you have to cross that river to New York City. The kind of joints Dino worked up and down the coast fired his determination, and he plotted the course. He was barely into his teens when he made that river crossing.

As a Rascal, Dino became a pop star and was a joy to watch. With his head switching from side to side, his sticks twirling off the backbeat, Dino used showmanship to add impact to the groove he laid down. Applying a jazzman's sense of discipline to a rock & roll spirit, he drummed the Rascals into rock history. "Good Lovin'," "I've Been Lonely Too Long," "People Got to Be Free," "You Better Run," and "Groovin'" are all songs that sound as fresh today as they did the first time I cranked them up on my radio, over fifteen years ago.

During the fall of 1981, Steve Van Zandt recorded his album, Men without Women. *It was my pleasure to be a part of that project. In support of that album Steve put together a band, called them the Disciples of Soul, and began to tour. He had Dino on drums.*

Around Christmas 1982, Little Steven and the Disciples of Soul played the Jersey shore. It was great to see and hear Dino once again. Backstage before the show I asked him if he still twirled his sticks. He told me he thought it was a corny thing to do; audiences were so much more sophisticated these days. "Nah," I said. "I think it would be great—it's part of you!" He smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

The Disciples played a smoking set. Near the end of their performance, Steve introduced each band member, saving Dino for last: "On drums, the legendary Dino Danelli ! " Not missing a beat, Dino turned his head and suddenly sent those sticks twirling. The place went crazy.

MW: You once told me about how you used to lug your drums on the train from New York to Jersey to play gigs when you were a kid. Let's start there.

DD: That's going back to when I first began playing drums. 1 was living at the Metropole [the famous jazz club on Seventh Avenue and Forty-eighth Street in New York City], where I first started to get a reputation as a drummer. But the *first* band I played with, even before my Metropole days, was King Curtis's band. 1 used to sit in with him and his band at a place in New Jersey called the Banker's Club. The Banker's Club was located in Union City, just across from lower Manhattan. The joint used to have an amateur night on Mondays and Tuesdays, and 1 used to go up there with just a pair of sticks and sit in with King Curtis. We'd play "Drum Boogie" and some other Gene Krupa songs. I got to go up there every week. It was great. It was my first introduction to being in a band. King was a real nice guy. He was always pulling for the guy who was trying to learn and make it.

MW: So you hadn't been in a band before that?

DD: No. I got a funny story that went down even before my Banker's Club days. I had a nightclub when I first started playing, around '58. Underneath our apartment house in Jersey City were these coal bins. Well, I cleaned out the bins, shingled the place up, and called it Dino's Casino. I built a little stage and set up a speaker, and

From the Michael Ochs Archives

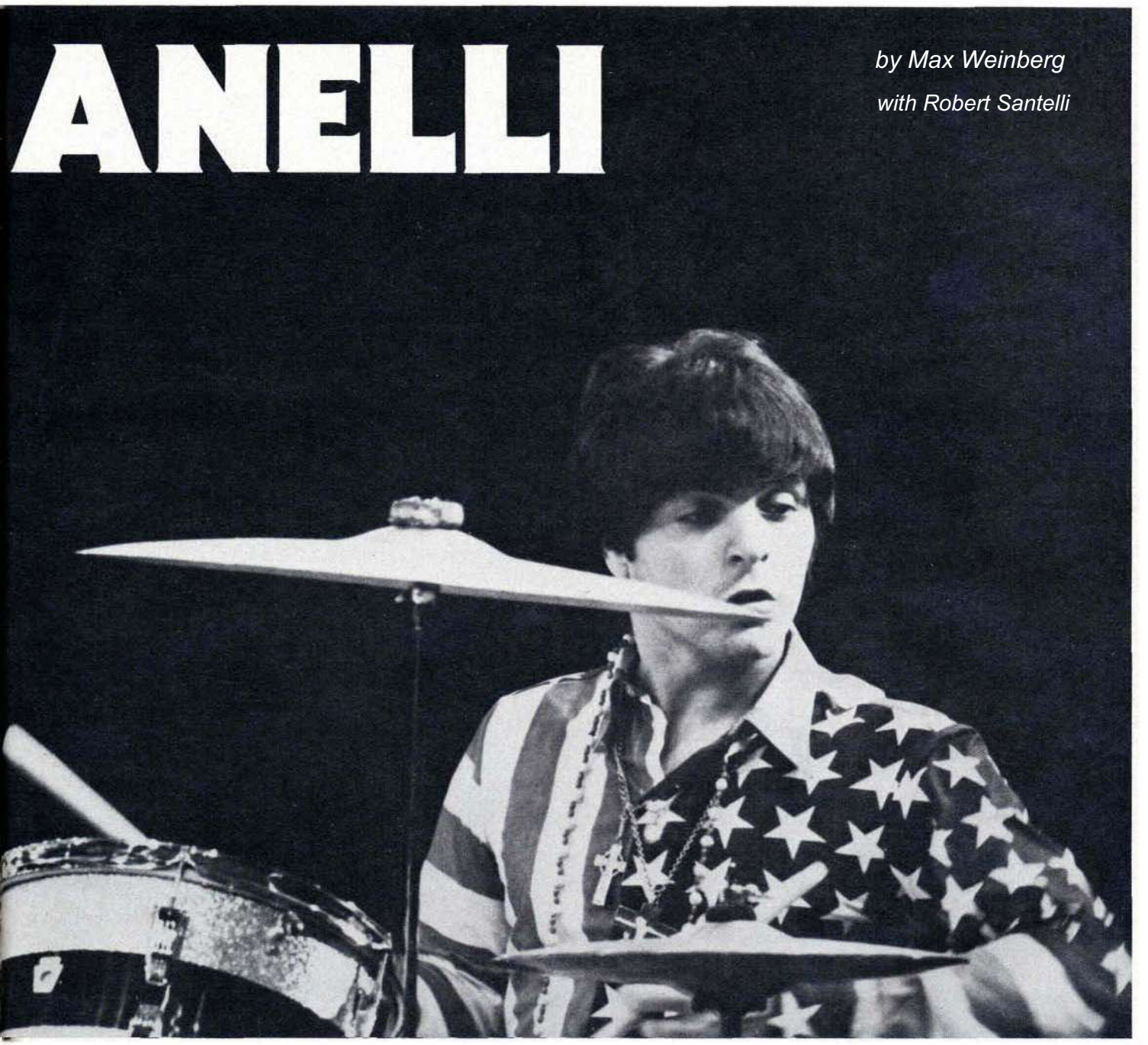
I'd play my drums to a record on the hi-fi. Kids used to come from the neighborhood and sit and watch me play.

It started to get really popular. After a while kids would bring booze and girls, and it became a club. They'd call me up, and I'd tell them what time the first show was. There were two shows a night. I wouldn't charge anybody; people would just come and hang out. And musicians would show up: saxophone players and other horn players. It was really great. I was twelve years old and it even made the newspapers. The police raided and padlocked the place because there was liquor and everybody was under age. I got closed up. It was on the front page of the *Jersey Journal.* From Dino's I went to another

ANELLI

by Max Weinberg

with Robert Santelli



place in Union City called the Transfer Station. It was the seediest place around. Nothing but truck drivers and slutty girls. That was great, you know. I met a hillbilly band just up from Tennessee whose leader was a guy by the name of Ronnie Speakes. That band was into playing or copying Elvis Presley-style rock & roll. What happened was, their drummer was leaving and Speakes asked me to join. I had never played rock & roll, but I joined them anyway. They brought me down to Tennessee with them. There I met one of the best drummers I ever heard in my life. He was a cripple, paralyzed from the waist down, so he had a special hook-up on his bass drum pedal so his leg would be higher than normal. He would play his highhats and would hit his elbow on his knee, and that would set off his bass drum. He'd leave out certain beats and just hit his bass drum, but always in the right spot. Bobby Coleman was his name. He showed me all these fantastic fills and a lot of rock & roll things that I never heard of before. Things like heavy backbeat, a very sparse bass drum, lots of syncopation. Bobby Coleman and Speakes introduced me to rock & roll roots.

When we came back to the New York area, we got a job at the Metropole. The Metropole was turning into a rock & roll place in the afternoon, but they still played jazz at night. Before this, I used to go to the Metropole and stand outside and listen to Gene Krupa play. He used to play there almost every month. I must have been eleven or twelve years old.

The Metropole used to leave its doors open to entice people to go inside. The front of the club was pretty much all glass, so I could stand outside and watch the whole show for free. When I got the gig with Ronnie Speakes and we began playing the Metropole, the people at the club remembered me. We'd play in the afternoon, and I'd stay around for the evening shows.

The people who ran the Metropole took a liking to me. I was like their adopted son, and they let me live upstairs in one of the dressing rooms. Being at the Metropole so much, my goals got bigger than just playing in Ronnie Speakes's band. And then

one night I met Gene Krupa. We got to be friends, and he'd take me into his dressing room between shows. He'd always lie down between sets because he had heart trouble. But we'd talk, you know. He knew I really wanted to make it as a drummer. Just listening to him talk about the old days with Benny Goodman and the others was fantastic.

MW: Did you ever get to sit in with Krupa's band?

DD: Never sat in with Krupa's band, but I sat in with Lionel Hampton's band.

MW: When the Young Rascals came out with "Good Lovin'," your publicity people made a big deal out of you playing with Hampton.

DD: It made good copy, I guess, but I only played with Hampton's band for two nights. It was just a jam, but it was great playing with a twenty-piece band.

I think the real turning point in my life was when 1 went down to New Orleans. The music scene there is so alive and figured so heavily in the creation of rock & roll. I had never experienced that funky kind of music before. I never slept. I took in all that street knowledge, and it changed my musical outlook. I stayed in New Orleans about a year.

When I went back to New York, I put together a rhythm & blues band called the Showstoppers based on the things I'd heard down in New Orleans. We traveled around the Midwest. Nothing spectacular, just a real good show band. After that band broke up, 1 moved back to New York and the Metropole. This was about 1964 when the Twist was happening at the Peppermint Lounge. That was *the* club at the time. I used to go over and listen to Ronnie Hawkins and the Hawks with Levon Helm on the drums. That's when I met Felix Cavaliere.

Felix had heard about me, and I'd heard about him. He was supposed to be a happening organ player, and he'd heard that I was one of the best drummers around. At this time, a singer named Sandy Scott was in town looking to put together a band to take to Las Vegas. So Felix and me and a couple of other guys went with her to Vegas. When we were out there the Beatles hit with "I Want to Hold Your Hand." We didn't know what the hell to think of it. I knew something was happening that was going to be real big, but couldn't put my finger on it. Felix and I made a deal that he was going to go home and put together a band like the Beatles, and I'd continue playing with Sandy Scott until he called me to come home. The Beatles gave us the idea and the urge to strike out on our own.

MW: Did you know any of the other Rascals then?

DD: I'd met our singer Eddie Brigati when one of the bands I was in played the Choo Choo Club in Garfield, New Jersey. He used to live around the corner from the joint. He'd come up on the stage and sing a couple of songs with whatever band was playing. We struck up a good friendship and said maybe we'd put together a band some day. He had already known Felix. Eddie was the brother of David Brigati, who was in Joey Dee's band. Felix was in Joey Dee's band too. That's where the connection to Felix comes in. Gene Cornish was playing guitar with his band at the Peppermint Lounge, as was Joey Dee's band. He met Felix and Eddie and struck up a friendship with them.

I was still in Vegas, so one day Felix called me up and said, "I got these two guys and they're really good. You should split Vegas and come home now." So I went back and the four of us got together at Felix's house in Pelham, New York. We must have learned about twenty-five songs in one night, all the current Top Forty hits. We came up with the name Young Rascals at the Choo Choo Club. One night we were playing there and someone said, "You ought to call the band the Little Rascals." We said, "Rascals, yeah; well, why don't we dress up like rascals?"

MW: I remember the first time I saw the group was on the sixties TV program, "Hullabaloo." You guys played "I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore" and you came out with knickers on. Did you ever feel weird wearing them?

DD: Oh yeah. The first Brooklyn Fox Murray the K show we did was really weird. We came out on stage and got laughed at—*until* we started playing.

MW: The Rascals were discovered at a club called the Barge in East Hampton, Long Island. How did you get that gig?

DD: We were playing the Choo Choo, and these two guys who were opening this new club, the Barge, had heard about us. They liked us and hired us to play the Barge on Monday and Tuesday nights. Ahmet Ertegun, the head of Atlantic Records, as well as other record people who summered in the Hamptons, came in to hear us simply because the Barge was the happening local club. We signed with Ertegun and Atlantic because Ahmet had the best rap. He heard "Good Lovin'," and that was it.

MW: "Good Lovin' " wasn't an original Rascals tune, though. How did you find that song?

DD: Felix and I used to go to a record store up in Harlem, and one day we came across "Good Lovin'," "Mustang Sally," which Wilson Pickett cut, and a few other records. We learned them and then changed them around so that they became our songs. A lot of people think "Good Lovin'," which was originally done by the Olympics, was our first record. It wasn't. We had "I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore" out first, but that tune only made it to around number fifty on the charts.

MW: The cymbal part for "Good Lovin' " was a tricky bit of business.

DD: Well, that was a combination of "What'd I Say" and some New Orleans riffs.

MW: Were you being managed by Sid Bernstein at this time?

DD: Yeah. Sid came out to the Barge, and heard us, and we signed with him. A week later we met Ahmet and signed with Atlantic.

MW: Remember at the Beatles concert at Shea Stadium in August 1965, they flashed on the scoreboard *THE YOUNG RASCALS ARE COMING!*

DD: (Laughs.) Yeah, that was Sid's idea. Sid, who promoted the show, told us all to be there because something was really going to surprise us. We were in the dugout. We had no idea what he was talking about. Then the scoreboard lit up with that line and fifty-five thousand people saw it. Then Brian Epstein, the Beatles' manager, came over to Sid and started choking him! (Laughs.) "Get that f——ing thing off the board NOW! Get it OFF!" he was screaming.

MW: What did you think of Ringo after you saw him perform?

DD: I liked him. He had great style; I never saw anybody play the way he did. I liked his simplicity. That's why I like Charlie Watts, too.

MW: Were the Rascals' arrangements spontaneous, or did you work things out?

DD: Both. Felix and I always had a magical thing. There were times when I thought out in advance what I wanted to play, but most of the time, it just happened. One of the good things about the Rascals was that we had unlimited studio time; it was in our contract. Any time we wanted to rehearse or fool around, Atlantic would cancel whoever else was in the studio for us, so we could go in there and jam and come up with lots of material.

The songwriting started after "Good Lovin'." The first song I think Eddie and Felix wrote together was "You Better Run." I remember that the bass drum part I came up with for that record was really strange. It was a fast bass drum. And that was thought up in the studio just fooling around.

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Bill Bruford

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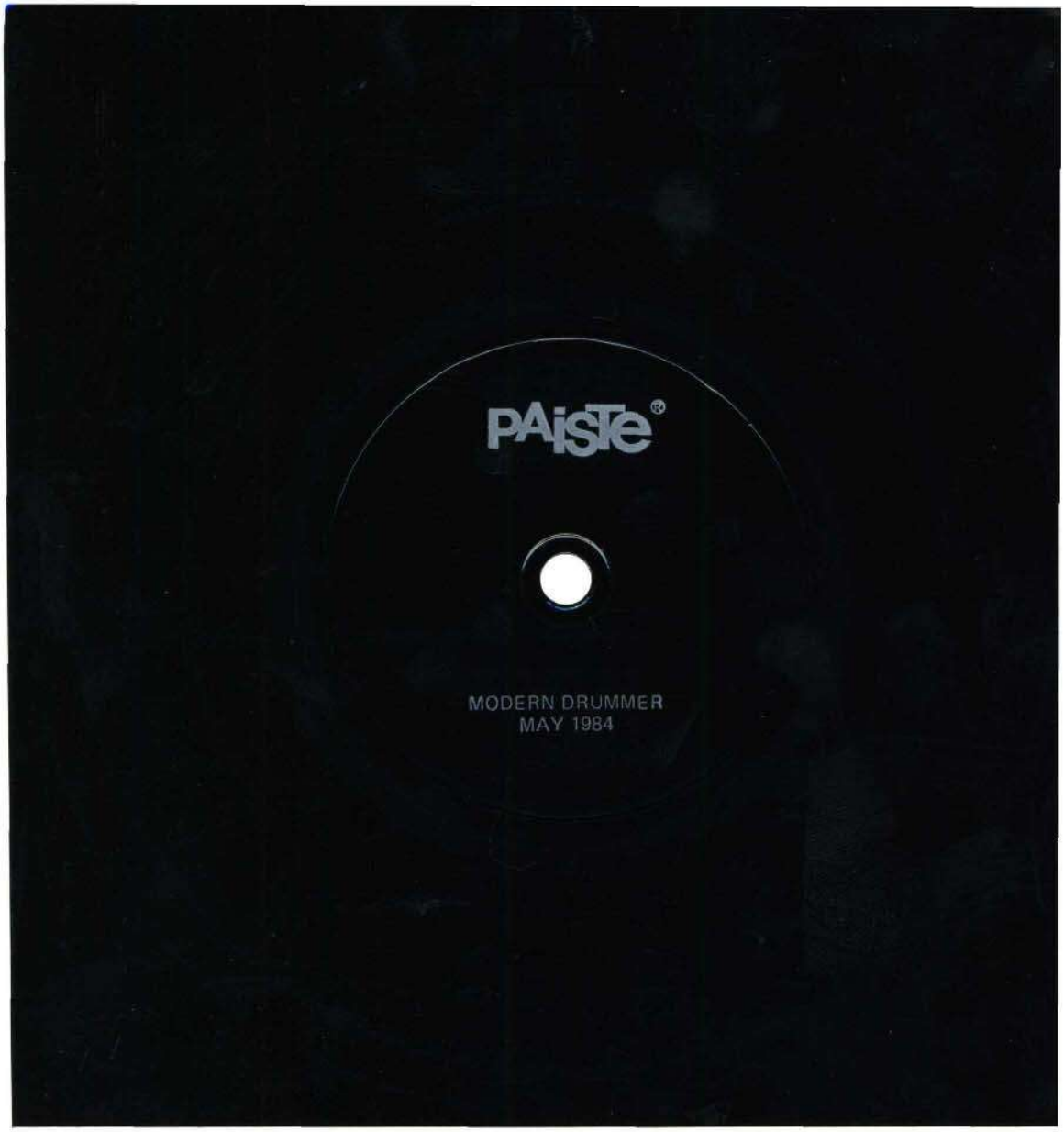
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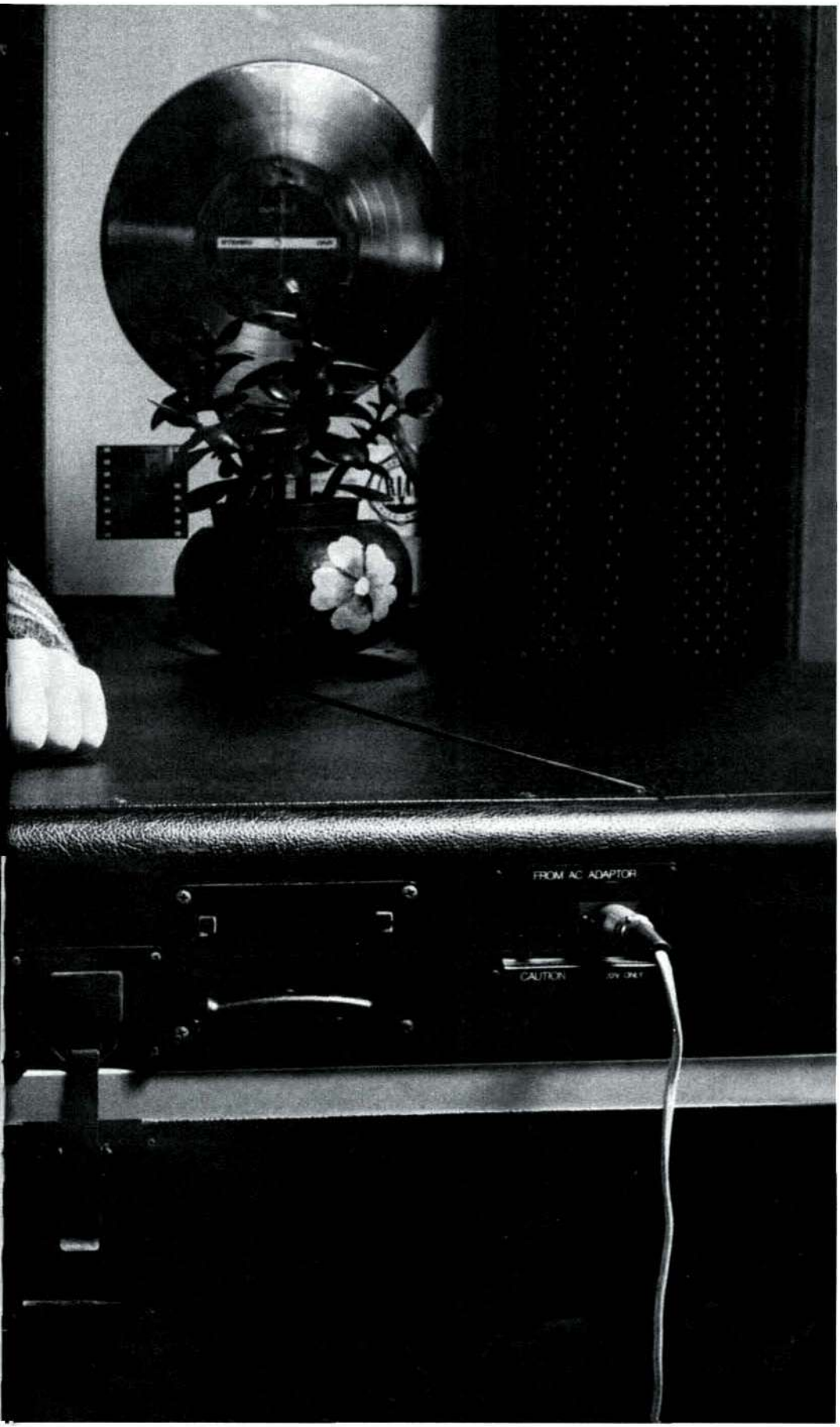

"I'm from a good middle class background where nobody'd ever heard of a musician … much less a drummer. After years of trying hard to deny I was a musician, around the age of 17, I realized there was no choice in the matter.

"In 1972 we were just forming King Crimson. Back then, you had two cymbals — a big one and a little one — and they both sounded the same, anyway. Then I came across Paiste, with their tremendous range of sounds, and suddenly the whole thing opened wide up. It was perfect for a band like King Crimson, that was interested in changing the way people do things with guitars, basses, and drums.

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by Robyn Flans

Ken Scott:
A Producer's Perspective

Ken Scott should have been a drummer. He laughs as he illustrates the point: "Rick Derringer was over the other night and we were discussing an old song. For some obscure reason, he counted it off and immediately acted as if he were playing a guitar. I immediately acted as if I were playing drums."

*Instead of p*laying *drums, though, Scott has gained a reputation as the ultimate drummer's producer. At 16, he started as a second engineer on* A Hard Day's Night *by a group called the Beatles—not too shabby a start! After graduating to first engineer on* Magical Mystery Tour *and* The White Album, *he engineered a David Bowie-produced project and fate struck. In passing, Ken mentioned to Bowie that he had tired of only engineering, and Bowie asked him to coproduce his next project,* Hunky Dory.

In the mid '70s, Scott left England and moved to L.A., where he began producing such acts as the Tubes, Devo, Supertramp, Dixie Dregs, Billy Cobham, Kansas, Stanley Clarke, Jeff Beck and Missing Persons. From his list of credits, it's not difficult to discern that he has worked with some of the most prominent drummers, and from the stories he tells, it's evident how much he enjoys it.

RF: You've worked with some terrific drummers. What appeals to you about a drummer?

KS: It depends on the music. Under the right circumstances, I love the fast Billy Cobham-style drummer. Under different circumstances, I prefer the Ringo Starr approach, which, when it comes to tom fills, is more the space that he leaves than the tom-toms he hits. It depends purely on the music. Quite often a drummer will come in and try to play the fast fills. I have to work very hard to calm that person down, because it just doesn't work.

RF: What was it like working with Ringo and the Beatles?

KS: Obviously it was incredible.

RF: There has recently been a book published which stated that Paul, rather than Ringo, actually played the drum tracks.

KS: Ringo did it, and anyone who says otherwise is talking complete and utter bullshit. On "Back In The USSR," my.recollection is that they all tried playing drums and we probably used most of Paul's, but bits and pieces were played by George and John as well. That was the time that Ringo quit the band, so he definitely didn't play on that. And there's "Love Me Do" as well. [Ringo played on the album cut, while session player Andy White recorded the single.] On various songs, there were specific drum fills that either Paul or John would have in mind, and they'd teach him what to play, but he did play. More often than not, what he came up with on his own was probably more unique than what they got him to play. He's a most incredible drummer. So many of the fills that he did were totally unique and certainly unheard of at that time. A certain amount of it was lack of knowledge. He did not know what he should play, so he did what he felt, and it came out much better.

RF: What do you do to get your drum sound? And what kind of sound do you like?

KS: Generally as big a sound as possible. For the most part, I don't have any problems getting tom sounds. For those I always use Neumann *87's,* normally with kepexes [sound gates]. The bass drums are the second easiest. Back in '74 I was working on a Stanley Clarke album with Tony Williams. Up to that point, I had always been into the single-headed bass drum, with the mic' just poking in there, and a fair amount of dampening on the toms. Tony was great because, although he found it difficult to play—he's used to two heads—he went along with what I requested and did it all. The first two days we were getting master takes. Then on the third day, on a particular track, he said, "Look, for this track I've got to have both heads on my bass drum," so I suddenly had to work out a way of getting the kind of sound I wanted but giving him the freedom with both heads. After some experimentation, I ended up suspending the mic' from wires inside the drum, adding some dampening, and then putting the other head back on. It sounded incredible. Stanley and I just looked at each other, went back and re-did all the tracks. Tony found it so much easier to play that way; the feeling was so much better and the drum sound was so much better. That's what I've done with bass drums ever since.

RF: What about the toms?

KS: It's just the mic's over the top—very standard. The hardest thing generally for me to get is the snare. I don't know if I've ever been 100% satisfied with the snare sound. I always want it to be deeper than it actually comes out. Some drumsets come in with very deep snare drums that sound perfect acoustically, but if you mike them from the top, it's all head; you don't get any of the snare. Mike them from underneath and you get all the snare. I've tried using two mic's, but it's never quite worked out. In general, I end up going to a slightly thinner snare drum to get the best sound. It's always a little thinner than I like, but the day I'm 100% happy with what I do will be the day to give up.

RF: What microphones do you use most?

KS: The toms and snares are all Neumann mic's, *87's* on toms and then kepexes. I generally use a *KM84* on the snare, with kepex. I use an Electro-Voice *RE20* on bass drums, and kepexes. I vary on overheads, depending on what the studio has.

RF: What about the difficulties that some drummers have tuning floor toms?

KS: I've never had too much trouble with that. Back in the early days I used to try to tune the drums for the drummers, but that was short-lived. I decided to leave it up to them; they supposedly know best. If it doesn't sound good, then I get them to change it.

RF: How long does it generally take you to get the sound you're satisfied with?

KS: It can vary from three hours to ... I think the longest ever was two days on Supertramp's *Crime Of The Century.* Most of that time was spent trying to get the snare sound. We eventually got a sound we were exceedingly happy with at the time. I go back now and think, "Naw, it should have been different."

RF: How much of the drummer's opinion do you take into account?

KS: The way it will sometimes go is: I'll be working on a sound in the control room, and I'll make the drummer try everything possible to get the sound. Suddenly the

VINNIE COLAIUTA

A TEXTURAL APPROACH TO CYMBAL PLAYING

Vinnie Colaiuta's endlessly inventive drumming has imparted a special kinetic energy to the music of Frank Zappa, Joni Mitchell and others. The basis for Colaiuta's approach is textural; he connects to the sound sources around him by creating a shifting panorama of unexpected textures from his drums and cymbals.

"I don't think mathematically when I play anymore. You count out what you do initially, but that becomes part of your vocabulary. I'm not just dealing with rhythms, I'm playing *sounds*. I'm a reactive drummer. I listen to other sound sources and respond with my own textures.

"It's really a 'drum set' way of thinking, instead of just hearing rhythms. Especially those bizarre rhythms you hear in your head...I know what sound source they're gonna go to right away. I'll hear different explosions on the cymbal that might fall into a place where no one expects it. I don't think about the rules, just how it's going to sound. I'll play rim shots on the tom toms; it's the way I play."

Vinnie's Live Set-Up

Playing the cymbals brings Colaiuta's style into even greater relief. Signature techniques like "punctuating" on the bell of the ride cymbal let him maintain the rhythmic pulse while commenting on it.

"It's a real articulate sound that doesn't seem to wash out as much for straight 8 time as playing on the body of the cymbal does. I might play full 8th notes on the body of the cymbal and in between those notes on the bell. Not even steady ride time, just broken-up things. Sometimes I break them to make them purposely sound jagged. Other times I try to make them sound fluid."

Colaiuta's definite opinions about playing cymbals that feel exactly right are the reason why he invariably chooses Zildjian.

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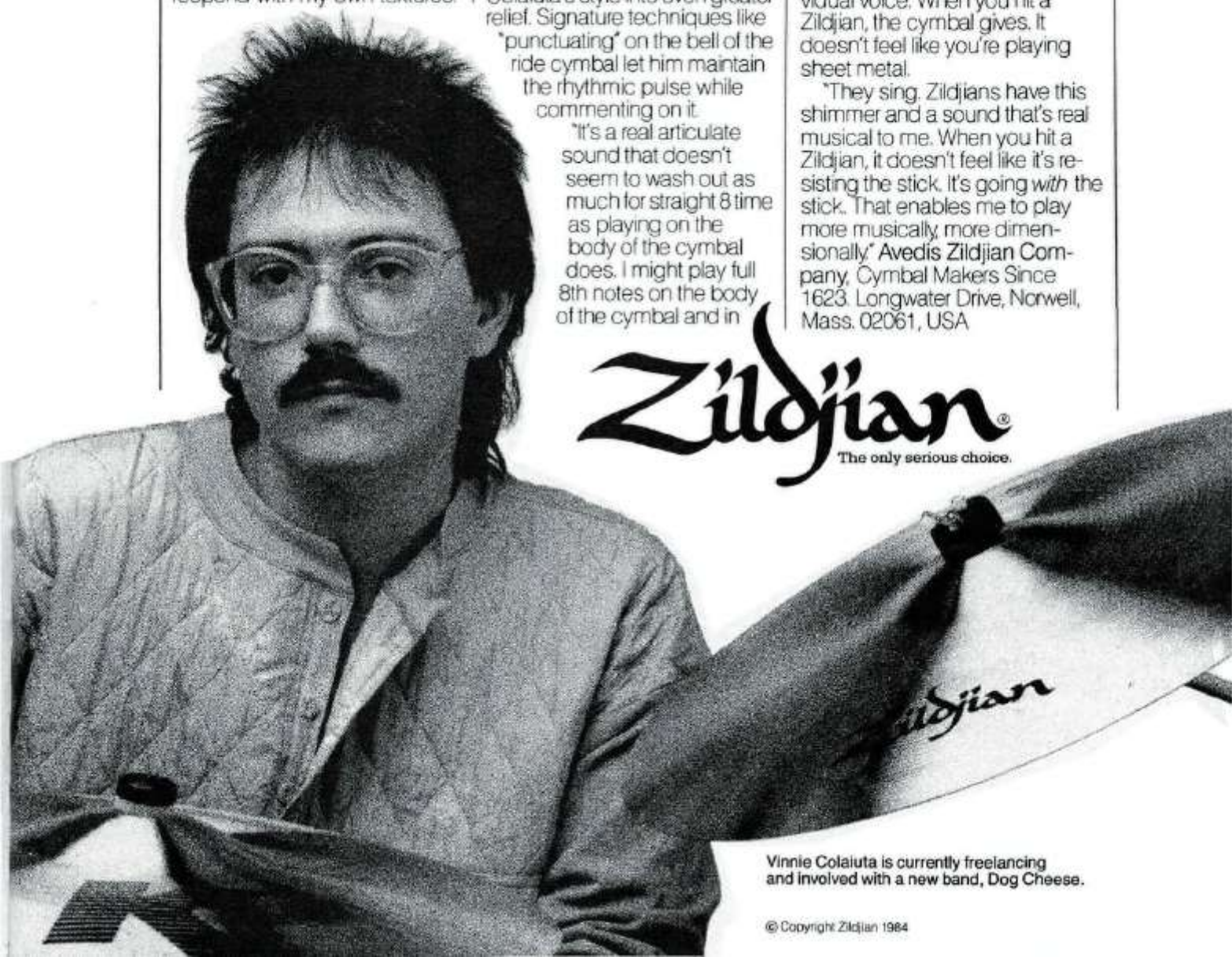

Vinnie Colaiuta is currently freelancing and involved with a new band, Dog Cheese.

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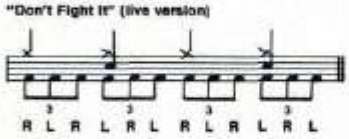

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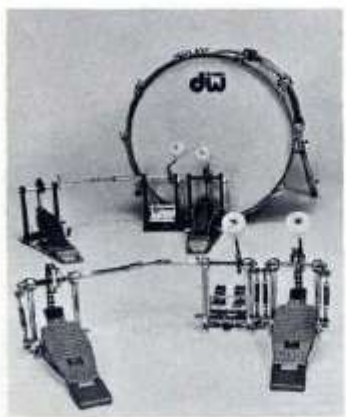

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drummer will say, "Okay, that's it. We're there," going totally by the acoustic sound of the drum. I'll say, "We can't use that. Put some drums down on tape, and come and hear it for yourself." Generally speaking, because of past reputation, I have no problems with drummers about the sound. At one point I was working with Jeff Porcaro on an album, and it was the first time I had worked with an L.A. studio musician. He was great. His drums were set up totally for the L.A. drum sound: very, very dead, single heads on the toms; dampening galore; a single head on the bass drum. I said, ''Okay, first, take all the dampening off the toms and put both heads back on. Then I'll suspend a mic' inside the bass drum, and we'll put both heads on." He looked at me for a minute and said, "Are you sure?" I told him I was, and he said, "Okay, whatever you say." After he did it, he came into the control room, heard the sound and was blown away. I've heard stories since—and you never know quite how true they are—that for about the next six to nine months, he was going into sessions saying, "I'm not changing the drums. You're using S7's, kepexes . . . " That was great.

RF: What album was that?

KS: A guy by the name of David Batteau on A&M, an album called *Happy In Hollywood.*

RF: How was it working with Terry Bozzio and his large setup?

KS: It was great. Producing Terry was very different for me, because he uses *Roto-Toms.* Suddenly it was impossible to have two heads. The first time I worked with Terry was at a friend's studio, and there was a very rough assortment of mic's. I wasn't too perturbed because we were only supposed to be making demos. They finished up being masters. Terry's very easy to get a drum sound on, though, as are most of the drummers who have done a lot of recording. You tend to have the problems with the people who haven't been in the studio quite so often. They have their kit set up for playing live, and that doesn't always work in the studio.

RF: What advice do you have for young drummers looking forward to their first recording experience? What should a drummer know?

KS: As much as possible! But be willing to drop some of the things if people say, "It's not working like this. Do it another way." The best way to learn is purely by experience. You get to know what works in the studio with your particular kit, and you learn to have total faith in the engineer and producer.

RF: What about projects where a new group comes in and the drummer "can't cut it," so the group's drummer is ousted for a studio drummer?

KS: I've never dealt that way. I'm a firm believer in bringing out the best in the band, and not using outside musicians, unless it's an instrument that the band doesn't already have. Apart from that one exception, I will keep going until the band gets what I want. One thing I've learned from my 20 years of experience in the studio is to be extremely patient. I can keep on going over something time and time again. When it's right, I'll know it. If I think I'm losing my objectivity, I'll stop and move on to something else, and finish the problem track later. I'm there to bring out the best in the artist—whatever that takes. Bringing in outside musicians isn't, as far as I'm concerned, enhancing the artist.

RF: What about someone who is not familiar with overdubbing?

KS: I think that anyone who is that interested in a career in music at this point *has* to know about overdubbing. With the sales of four-track and eight-track tape machines to the general public now, they know all about it. The standard of demos around now is unbelievable. These kids have never been into a studio before. They've recorded in their garage or wherever, and the quality quite often is superb. The knowledge is out there now, and I don't know where anyone who doesn't know about overdubbing has been for the last ten years.

RF: Speaking of overdubbing, I understand that Terry Bozzio works in quite an interesting fashion.

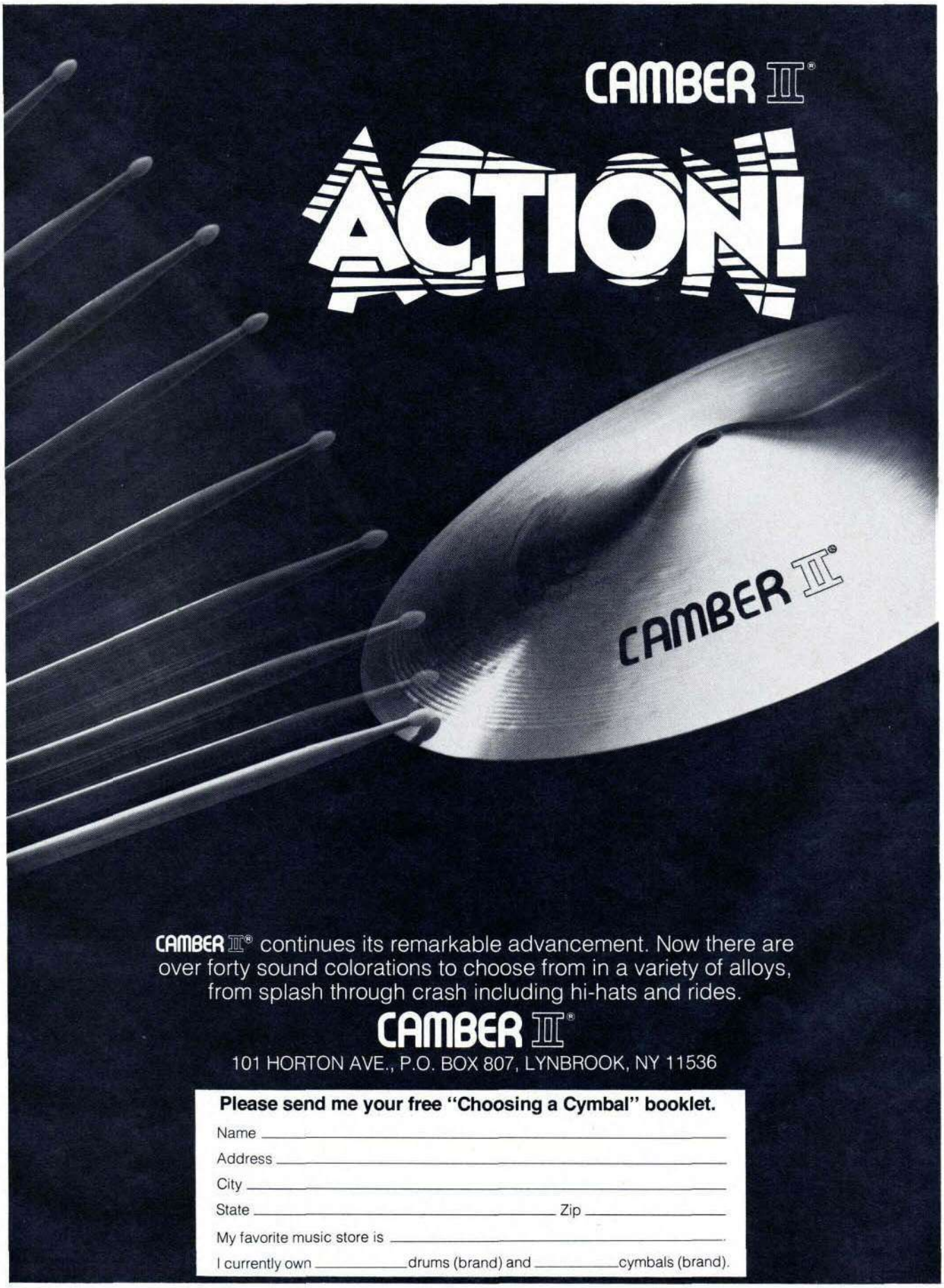
KS: On the Missing Persons album, *Spring Session M,* quite often we put down Terry without any other musicians playing. He is the main writer in the band, so when writing a song, he knows exactly what he's going to be doing. He feels he can concentrate on what he's doing that much more when there's no one else to distract him. I like to concentrate on one instrument at a time when recording, using the other players only for "scratch tracks." Coming into that situation, Terry felt that, since the other musicians' tracks would be ditched instantly, why even bother? 1 just let him concentrate on what he had to do to get it as perfect as he could.

RF: Without having to go back and fix it drastically later?

KS: Without having to fix it at all. I'm a slasher at tape. I do a major amount of editing. I worked with Kansas, on the album before their most recent one, and up to that point, they had never edited a multitrack 2" tape. When they told me that, it freaked me out, because a lot of their earlier stuff was very, very complex. They had to get the whole take every time. I don't work that way. If we get a good first half, we'll just do the second half and put it together. Quite often there will be more editing than that. There might be something slightly off, but that's why I prefer working with real drums and drummers, as opposed to Linn drum machines and things like that.

RF: You don't like that perfection?

KS: No, not at all. The first time I ever saw one of those, I thought, "Wow, this is



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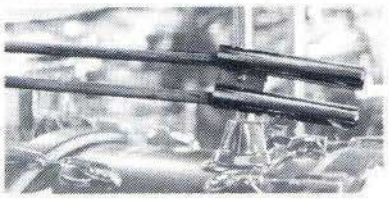

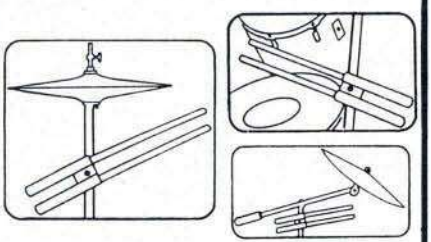

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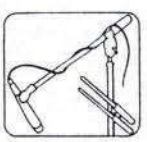

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great. This is amazing." But I got so sick and tired of it.

RF: What about the Simmons?

KS: I have certain feelings about them which I know aren't shared by many people. I don't think they will last. We went through the techno-pop, the very heavily synthesized music, and I think the audience out there is tired of it. That's why we're seeing the sudden backlash to the heavy metal again. It's the complete opposite. My feeling is: If you're going for a real drum sound, use real drums.

RF: What was it like working with Billy Cobham?

KS: Cobham is an incredible drummer. I often wish he hadn't gotten quite so involved with the jazz-funk side of things in his later albums. He is the most complex rock drummer ever, and probably the *loudest* drummer I've ever worked with. I was messing around with his bass drum one day when he started to do a solo for warm-up purposes. I couldn't hear for 15 minutes! I have no idea how he can still hear. A lot of young drummers will go for the biggest, most complex kit they possibly can, thinking it's going to make them better drummers, which invariably it never does. With Cobham, no matter what size the kit gets to, he can use it. Luckily I never had to record the kit he was playing the last time I saw him, with three snare drums, three bass drums and 12 toms.

RF: How large a set was he using when you recorded him?

KS: Two bass drums, one snare, ten toms, and a gong bass drum. That drum always worked better acoustically than for recording. The sound was just phenomenal. It was so loud. There was also a lot of attack on it. But when I recorded it, it just never quite came out, because I just couldn't get the lows.

RF: What about working with the technical versus the nontechnical drummer?

KS: Once again, it depends on the music. Let me put it this way: I don't think I've ever worked with a drummer who I wished could play *more.* If anything, I've wished the drummer would play less. In certain respects, the nontechnical may be better than the technical. It's like John McLaughlin, who is technically one of the greatest guitarists in the world, but sticks to that technicality the whole time. It doesn't always work for the music.

RF: Michael Botts told me that you got sounds out of him that no one else has. Can you explain what you do?

KS: I have no idea. What I do, I do automatically. Maybe it's the way I hear things differently than someone else. A long time ago I was working at Trident Studios, at the same time as Roy Thomas Baker. Roy was in the middle of cutting tracks for John Entwhistle's solo album when he had to leave suddenly on an emergency. So I covered him for the afternoon. We generally use the same mic's, and I got my normal drum sound. We got a take of the first song, and had started the second song when Roy came back in. I think Roy probably adjusted two things in the EQ, and it suddenly changed from my sound to his.

A similar kind of thing happened when I was working with Phil Spector on a Ronnie Spector song. It's just the very small things that I, Roy Thomas Baker and Phil Spector do naturally, that make our own individual sounds. Who knows what that is? If I knew exactly what it was, I'd probably try to market it and be a millionaire.

RF: When you talk about the *producer's sound vs. the band's sound,* is it possible in recording to retain the band's own sound, while still making them sound good to your producer's ears?

KS: I think I was heading in that direction when I stopped trying to tune their drums. Bozzio has his own sound; I think it comes across just within his style of playing. Take Steve Gadd: He works with God knows how many different engineers, but most of the time you know it's him. It just comes from the style, as opposed to the sound. Drummers will learn by experience, and strangely enough, they'll learn more from bad experiences than good experiences. On the first session you might get a great sound, and you'll really be happy with it. Then you'll go into a different room and try again, but the way you have the drums tuned won't work in that studio. You'll walk out and say, "God, it sounds terrible," but you'll learn that you have to change them and gradually you'll get to know how. You can always tell Stewart Copeland's drum sound. He has a totally unique way of tuning his snare. I'm sure when they went in the studio to cut the first album, they did it on a very limited budget, very quickly, so they probably didn't have time to mess around getting the drum sound—but it worked. He's changed it slightly, but there's still the basic thing there each time. If a drummer came into the studio with me with that sound, I'd probably try to change it, but you can never tell what's going to work with any individual. There are no hard and fast rules.

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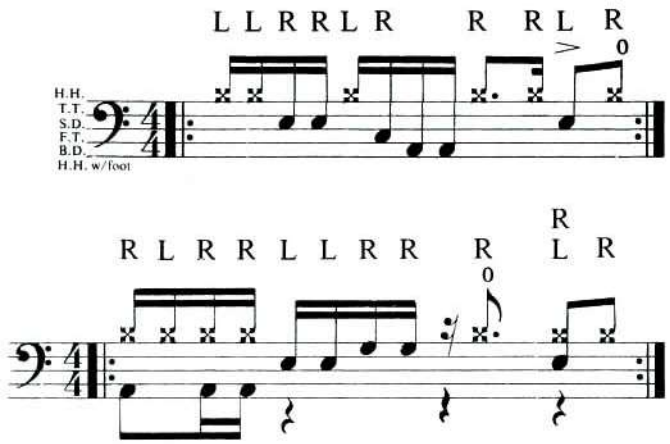
by James Morton

Great Grooves Part 1

From a general viewpoint, the word "groove" suggests a certain rhythmic precision in group playing, not unlike the word "tight" or the phrase "in the pocket." From a drummer's perspective, groove can also indicate a particular rhythmic motif, which, when played repeatedly, with precision, takes on a certain musical flow and pulse of its own. The precise notational makeup of the groove may or may not remain constant, but the basic feel remains. I invite you to try the following grooves. Some are simple in makeup, while others are rather complex, but I trust they will offer you musical and coordinational challenges, as well as new ideas you may wish to explore further.

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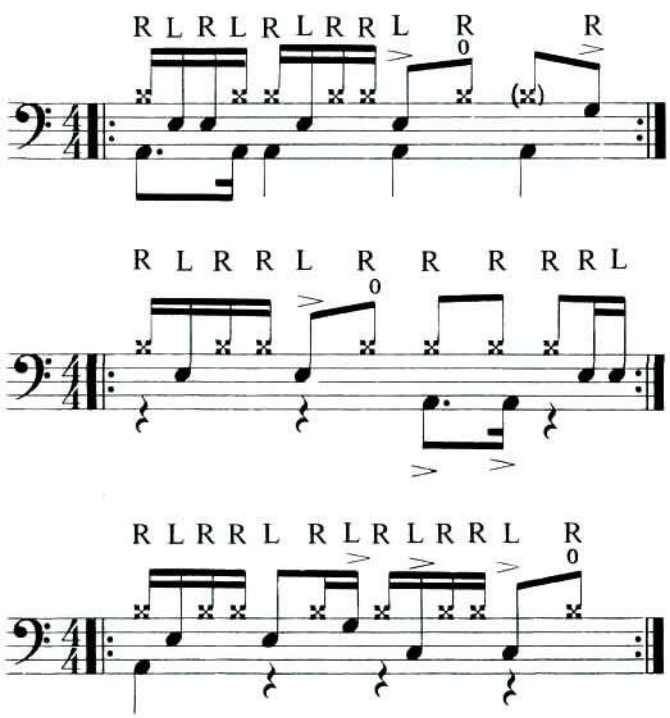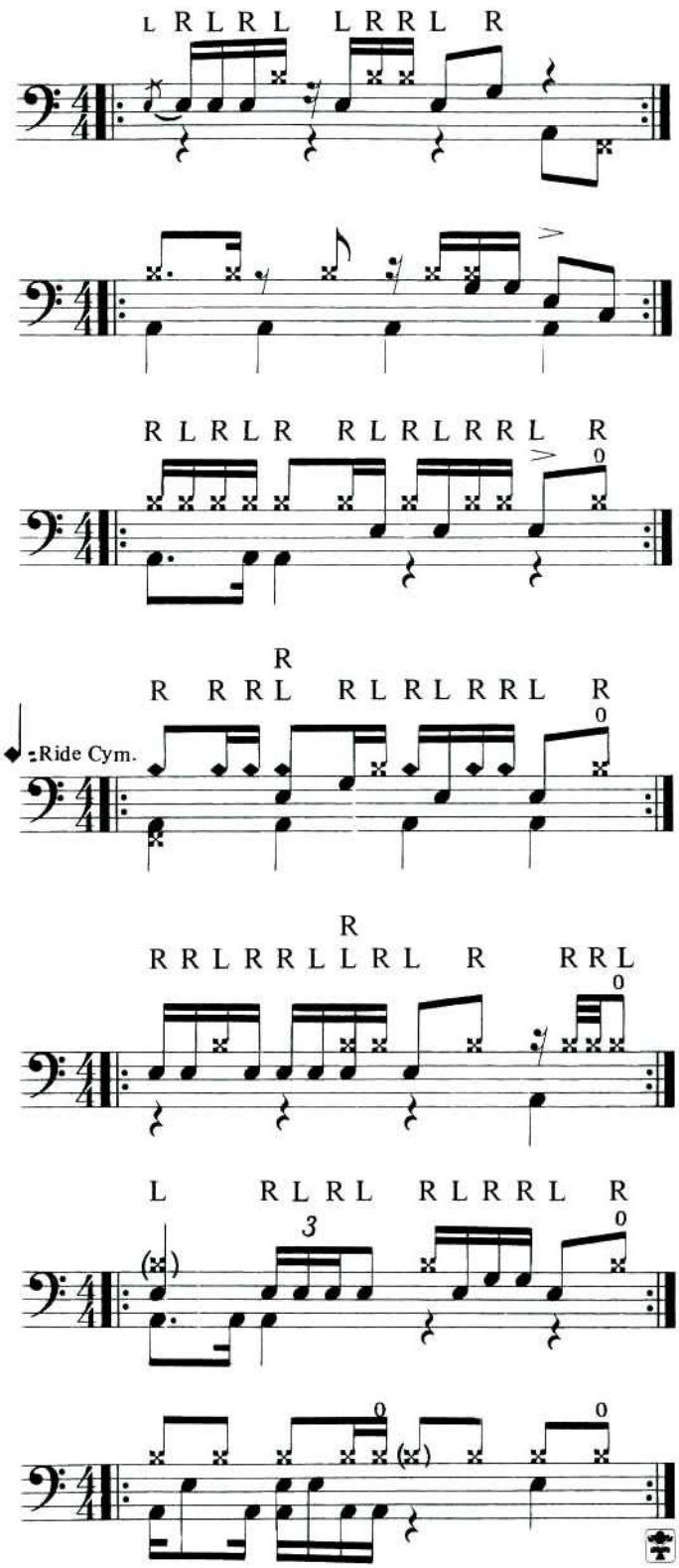
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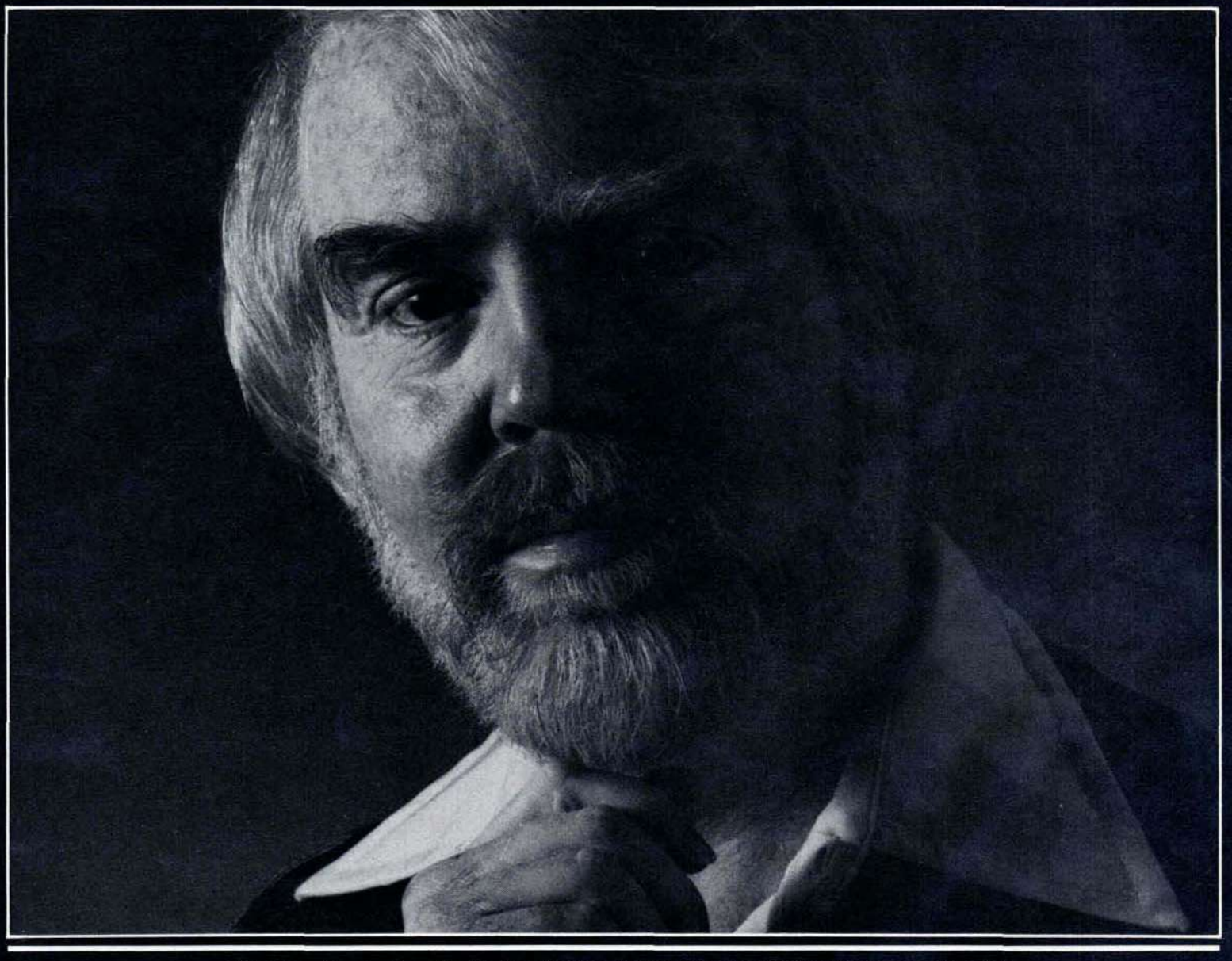

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by Roy Burns

How Many Drums Do I Really Need?

I have heard drummers say, "You don't need a big kit. If you play on a smaller kit, you will be more creative and more musical." Several famous drummers have been quoted as saying, "I can do everything I need to do on a basic setup. Anything more than four or five drums just gets in the way."

A friend of mine auditioned for a rock group recently. After the audition everyone in the group was very complimentary about his playing. However, everyone started to pack up without saying whether or not my friend had the job. He finally asked, "What do you think? Am I in or not?" The spokesman for the group said, "When did you clean your cymbals last? You know, to be in a group like ours you need a really good looking drumset. Your stuff doesn't look that impressive."

My friend responded, "Look, I just came off a six-week tour. Cleaning up my set is something that I do fairly often. Are there any other problems?" The spokesman said, "To be honest, your drumset is too small. We want a drummer who has a new double bass outfit with lots of toms and the cymbals way up in the air. We want someone with a flashy looking kit on stage." My friend did not get the job.

Deciding on how much equipment you really need can be a problem. In fact, it can be a very expensive problem. Drums and cymbals cost a great deal today. I'll admit that drum equipment overall has never been better, but the cost of much of it is quite high. I have heard great drummers play beautifully on no more than a bass drum, snare, hi-hat and one cymbal. I have also heard great drummers play a huge set with power, authority and great musical ideas. To me this means that the person playing is more important than how many drums are in the kit. This does not mean that there is anything wrong with a large kit. This decision is up to the artist.

My personal view is that the music should come first. Decide what you need in terms of equipment to play the way you feel. If you hear a lot of melodic ideas in your head, you may need a rack full of toms to express these ideas fully. If you are a time player who doesn't go in for soloing or frills, you might feel more comfortable on a more basic kit. A number of top popular drummers today have returned to simpler setups. Your own individual style and feelings about the role your instrument plays in a group must be taken into account.

The second thing to consider is the job at hand. A good example of this approach is Ed Shaughnessy's setup on the *Tonight Show*. Ed may be required to play rock, country, jazz, sambas, pop, ballads and fusion all in a single show. Obviously Ed needs a drumkit that will allow him to be versatile enough to cover all the styles involved. It's difficult to imagine someone playing all of this on an extremely small setup. So, Ed's setup reflects the job and the requirements involved, as well as his own personal preferences. If you are in a Las Vegas Show type of band with flashy costumes for each show, an old, beat-up drumset is going to look really out of place. If your group is quite visual, then you will need an attractive drumset. Its size is up to you. However, it must fit the style of the group to some degree in order for the entire visual presentation to be effective. Naturally, playing your best is a requirement for any and all types of bands and groups.

The drummer faces a lot of choices when deciding on a drumkit. Drummers really buy components and adjust them to their needs. Although the drumkit is played as one instrument, it is, in fact, a collection of instruments and no two collections are identical. There is much room for individuality.

Some younger players have the attitude that "This drummer must not be very good, because the kit is too small. A really good drummer would have more drums." This is an unfortunate point of view, because a decision has been made without hearing the drummer play. There is an old saying which goes, "It's not what you do that counts. It's how you do it." In real life it's what you do *and* how you do it. It all counts. So don't be intimidated by the people who insist that only a small kit is good, and don't be intimidated by people who say that only a large kit is good. Make your own decision based upon what you feel your needs are.

1. If you are on a tight budget, buy a top-quality basic drumset made by a top manufacturer. Then add to the kit as you go along and as your finances allow. Don't buy a cheap set. If you are working or trying to get into a working band, purchase good equipment.

2. Purchase the type of setup that will satisfy the needs of the music you will be playing. Take into consideration the style of the band. A double bass set looks pretty funny in a jazz trio. A three-piece set looks pretty funny on a big stage with a rock group. Both of these options are really up to you. However, when you are competing for work, try to take every aspect of the particular situation into account. Give yourself the best possible chance to succeed.

3. If you are an all-around drummer playing many kinds of music, you may need two sets: a big one and a small one. Studio drummers usually have two or three sets for different musical situations. If you take care of your equipment, it can be purchased a little at a time over several years. Used equipment which is in good condition is a great option for a second set.

4. If you can afford to do so, don't sell or trade in drums or cymbals that are in good condition. Collect instruments over a period of time. This is especially true of exotic instruments. A special old snare drum, a certain cymbal or a special gong are all good examples. You never know when you might need something with a very special sound.

Last but not least, put the music first. All other considerations will then fall into line regardless of the size of your kit. Play musically and you can't go wrong.

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Williams continued from page 13

grudge anybody the money they make. I'm just saying, "Come off it."

RM: It would seem that a drummer who could play different styles would avoid being labeled. But you've played in a variety of settings, and the result has been that you get more labels than anybody. In most of the reviews I read for *Joy Of Flying,* people said things like, "This song is Williams in his such-and-such bag, and the next song is Williams in his so-and-so bag..." and so on.

TW: Yeah, but that's okay.

RM: I guess you've learned to live with it.

TW: Yeah, I have. The fact that you noticed it proves that it's been worthwhile.

RM: Despite the different styles, the marketing people still label you as ''jazz.'' Can you accept the fact that the next album you make will be put in the jazz bin no matter what's on it?

TW: That's not true. I could make an album that doesn't have my name on it and call it, say, The Television Set Band. It depends on what the music is. If I made a record and everybody started dancing to it, it wouldn't go in the jazz bin. When you bring it to the record store, if it has already been played on the radio and people have been dancing to it, it's going to be treated differently.

RM: Personally, the only place I've seen your records has been in the jazz bins.

TW: Yeah, they have never been anywhere else. I haven't made that many records. I've made, I think, ten albums, which isn't very many. If I averaged it out it's like one every other year, so I've got to get on the stick. I hope to turn that around.

RM: Do you have anything coming up in the near future?

TW: Well, I've been talking to some people in New York about my writing, which has started to pay off now. I'm finally getting the kind of record deal that I've been looking for. So we start recording my new project in late July. It will be my first record in five years.

RM: That's too long.

TW: Well, I had to wait, because I felt I had to acquire some of the tools that I lacked. I had to put my last record, *Joy Of Flying,* together really quickly. It was a real good album, but I had no music on it myself. After that experience and a couple of other experiences like that, 1 decided that I wanted to have a little bit more to say about certain things. So I waited and I think it's going to pay off. It was important for me to do it this way, because I've wanted to write for a long time. It was one of my goals as a youngster.

RM: Is there anything specific you can say about what's going to be on the album at this point, or would you rather that we wait to hear it?

TW: I don't know how to be specific about it. I really want it to have a lot to do with my approach to the drums. A lot of it

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will probably be dance oriented. It's going to be electric. I know that. But it's really hard to be specific about it, because I'm just starting to write the music and get it going.

RM: When you say it will be electric, does that mean we might even hear an electric drum machine on the record?

TW: Oh yeah, and Simmons—all kinds of stuff.

RM: But also acoustic drums, right?

TW: Yeah. I'm working on putting the Simmons, the drum machines, and the acoustic drums all together.

RM: Will the album reflect any of the current trends in music?

TW: Putting a record out gives me a chance to let people hear my reaction to a lot of the music I've heard. 1 think most artists, composers, and painters react to what's going on around them. It's good to take a step back from the scene for a while, in order to observe and think about everything. When I finally come out with something, part of it will be a reaction. It's like, "If I did that sort of thing, here's what it would sound like." I think it's going to be great—or else I won't do it! [laughs] I'm really excited about that, plus I'm excited about playing. This will give me an opportunity to put a band together, and go out and play. I haven't done a lot of that in the last three years. So getting out to play is the main impetus.

RM: You really seem to enjoy playing the drums.

TW: The whole idea of the drummer has been a motivating factor for me for many years. Really, I love the drums. This is kind of a sappy story, but I remember one time as a kid listening to a band. The drummer was a very cold drummer, and he played louder and louder, and stiffer and stiffer. I looked at him and started crying. I thought, "This guy is really playing the drums terribly." And I just got very emotional because 1 really love the drums and I want the drums to sound good. I see a lot of romance and beauty in a drum roll; I really hear it as a beautiful thing. So the idea of a drummer, and being part of that fraternity, has been strong, and it has carried me. Max Roach was the first drummer to really express it for me. He wrote music and expressed himself well. That was important to me.

As a result, I have this kind of tongue-in-cheek disdain for lead instrument players. I tell people that facetiously, but it needs to be said. With lead players, when you walk into the dressing room, what's on the couch? Ten horn cases. "Get your cases off the couch! People are going to sit there." Horn players are out front and they think the world revolves around them.

RM: You should put your bass drum case on the couch and see what they say.

TW: Yeah, right, right. And then I walk in a place and what's on *my* cases? Their coats, their horn cases, their guitar cases. My case isn't a table. I give them a hard time. But I mean it in a way, because I really want people to know that I think drumming is really important. It's a bit of defensiveness because I'm accused of playing loud, but that's what the drums are. I mean, that's like telling a piano player, "Don't play any higher than this octave." That's like telling a saxophone player, "Don't play these three keys. Play all you want, play all night, play all year, but don't play these keys." The volume and dynamics are part of the vocabulary of the drums. And that's part of people's fear, which goes back to the whole thing of slavery. When people were taken from Africa, their drums were also taken away, and the drum has been a very fearful instrument for a lot of people.

RM: That just reminded me of something Elvin said. He was talking about how drumsets have evolved. The first drumset he ever saw was sort of a Gene Krupa-type set. It was big and it was white pearl. And, of course, the reason it was white pearl was because it was part of the stage decoration; it matched the front of the music stands. They didn't have a white pearl string bass because that was an instrument, but drums were part of the furniture.

TW: Exactly, exactly. And there's a defensiveness built into this whole thing. The bass player has a 200-year-old bass and sax players have handcrafted saxophones. It's all these things that come up. I love the drumset. I don't play a lot of percussion. I'm a drummer. I don't play maracas; I don't play congas. I like drums. And it gets to be defensive. There's like a caste system that goes on with drummers.

RM: Like the old joke about a band being made up of five musicians and a drummer.

TW: Right.

RM: In your own case, though, with a group like V.S.O.P. you're recognized as being an equal member; you're not just the hired drummer.

TW: Yeah, because I don't do that. I haven't been playing with one band one year, and another band the next year, and so on, except for some of the things I've done at jazz festivals.

RM: I know you'll turn up here and there, but you don't really have that reputation as a sideman—a session drummer.

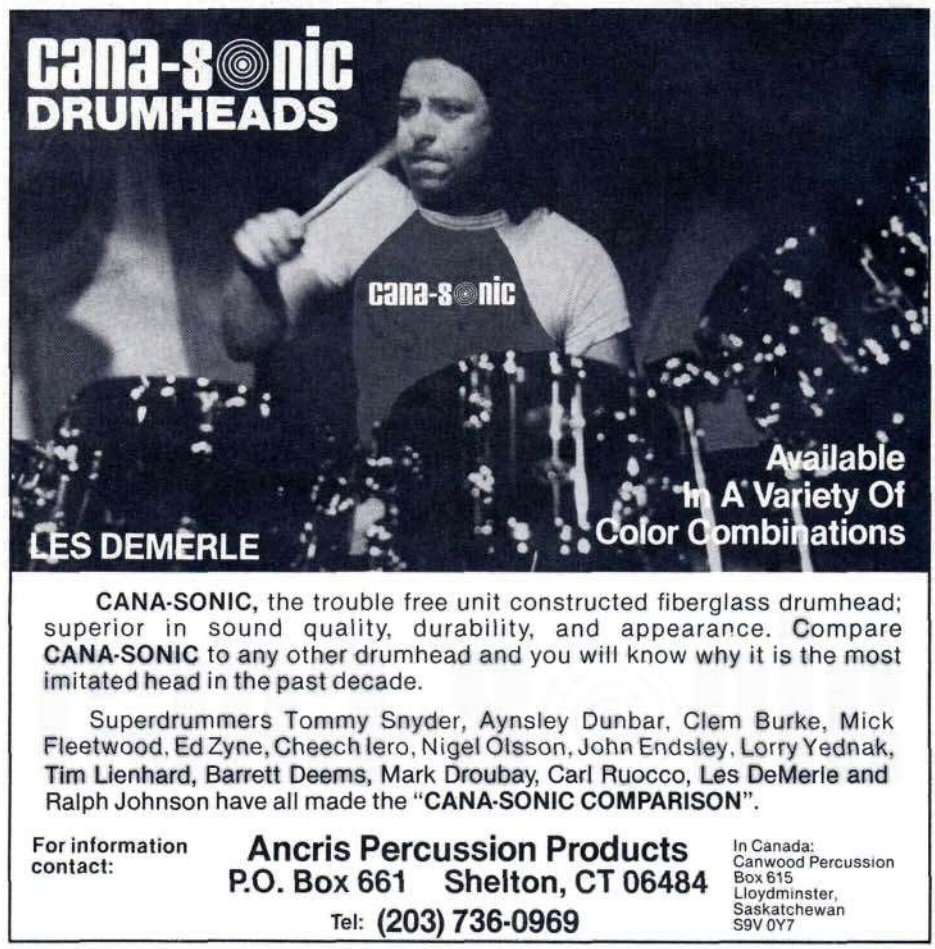
TW: Good.

RM: Hearing how warmly you speak about the drums, I'm surprised to read that you're fooling around with drum machines. So many drummers are violently opposed to them.

TW: Oh, yeah?

RM: A lot of studio drummers contend that they are actually losing work because of those machines.

TW: Yeah, I understand. But not having to deal with that, I use it because it's a tool, and it's great, and I'm in control of it. I'm the one programming it, so it's going to



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RM: When you were first on the scene, one of the things you had in common with all of the prominent jazz drummers was that everyone used Gretsch drums and K. Zildjian cymbals. When I started playing the drums, I bought Ludwigs because Ringo played Ludwigs. When you started, did you buy Gretsch because you had an idol who played Gretsch drums?

TW: Totally, [laughs] When I was a kid, 1 used to sit and look at the pictures of Max, and he always had a Gretsch drumset. I thought, "I want to have one of those." My dad bought me my first set, which was an old set of Slingerland *Radio Kings.* The bass drum was huge, and some of the drums didn't match. Finally, I had my first job—30 dollars a week. My mom helped me buy the first set that / bought, for 20 dollars a week, which 1 saved from the 30 dollars I was making on a weekend gig. So I bought my first set of Gretsch, which was silver sparkle—the same color, the same size as Max Roach's. Gretsch still makes the drums, to me it seems, with a certain sound. They are good drums for me. I've played Gretsch drums for ages.

RM: In fact, you've used them throughout your entire career.

TW: Yeah, I guess so. Consistency and loyalty have always meant something to me. I try to express that in different ways.

RM: Is there anything that you can put into words about what characterizes that sound?

TW: Yeah, it's the essence of the drum—a warm tone, a tone that's consistent throughout the set. It has a certain character. I just like the feel of the Gretsch drums. I see no reason to change equipment. I'm sure all the other drum companies make great drums. That's not what I'm saying. I'm just saying, what would I be doing? No one's offered me a better sound.

RM: I've often heard you equated with the K. sound more than any other single person.

TW: Great, fantastic. The K. sound—I got that from Max actually. Years ago—I think it was 1960—I came to New York to visit Max. I had met him I think in '59 or '58. He was kind enough to let me play with his band. Actually, he let me come up and sit in. I was about 12 or 13. Anyway, I went to visit him and we went out to the old Gretsch factory in Brooklyn. I met Mr. Gretsch—Fred Gretsch. At this time they had K. Zildjians at the factory. Max said, "Here, why don't you take this one? This sounds great." Max started me on the sound—a big, high, dark sound. That's the ride cymbal I have. It's a high tone, but the cymbal itself is a dark sound. I learned that, definitely, among other things from Max.

RM: How do you choose your cymbals now?

TW: I choose my cymbals in the same fashion that I tune my drums. I try to get the cymbals to sound good together as a group—homogeneous as a group—but individually they also sound distinctive, so that you know which cymbal I'm hitting. If you've heard that cymbal once and you hear it again, you know it must be *that* cymbal. The hi-hat sounds very distinctive—big. It's not a thin sound. I have heavy cymbals. I like that. I hit them and they're loud. So they sound distinctive individually, but they sound great as a group if you hear them all in succession. You hear a definite tone pattern. And I tune the drums that way too, so that they sound really distinctive—high to low. With drums that are next to each other, the hard part is to get the first tom definitely different from the second tom. My second tom has just enough tone space in between that it doesn't sound like the same drum. I see a lot of drummers who hit all these drums but they all sound the same, and I wonder why. It amazes me what some of us *don't*

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think about. I don't understand why some people do that. That's the first thing that comes to my mind. Don't they hear that all of their drums sound the same?

RM: Speaking of K.s, is there anything to be said about the new ones?

TW: Oh, yeah. I love them. If you give me a cymbal, I either like the way it sounds or I don't. If it's a K., then I like K.'s. Years ago they were all made in Turkey. Now they're all made in the USA. As long as I get what I need, you can call them Z.'s. A cymbal is a cymbal. I'm not that much of an equipment freak. That's not the product. The product is the music.

RM: Some people have several drumsets. If they're playing with a big band, they'll use a 24" bass drum. If they're playing with a trio, they'll use an 18", and so on and so forth. Correct me if I'm wrong, but as far as I know, you use the same set from electric music to the Great Jazz Trio. Is there something to be said about controlling the sound?

TW: Yeah, I think so. That's exactly what it is. That's exactly what I'm trying to portray. People I've worked with have asked me why I don't get a smaller bass drum. Why should I?

RM: Tell them to get a smaller piano.

TW: Yeah. "Play on two strings. Get out of here." I really like the drums. That's what I'm about. If we're playing soft and I have a 24" bass drum, I can play it there. One of the reasons I don't play an 18" anymore is that I got to the point where I was playing harder. If you know anything about physics, if I'm hitting the drums and they're not responding, I'm going to hit harder, and then I'm going to wear myself out. So that little drum sounds nice, but from back here where I'm sitting I'm not going to hear it. So I needed a little more weight, especially when I started playing in an electric situation. And when I played in the Great Jazz Trio, on my solo I could open up. A little drumset is nice. I like the 18". It's cute. It's really nice looking—easy to carry. It fits in the backseat of my car.

RM: When I started playing jazz, 1 was coming out of rock and I had a 22" bass drum. When I played at jazz sessions, people would say, "That's not a jazz bass drum."

TW: Everyone has these ideas. It was the same way when I was coming up. Everyone told me these preconceived things, like on cymbals it says "ride." Hey man, that's a *cymbal.* Don't tell me . . . You can use a cymbal anyway you want, but the company stamps them "ride" or "crash."

RM: Good Lord! That drummer is riding on a crash cymbal!

TW: [laughing] We saw you! We saw you!

RM: People were giving me all these profound reasons why Max and Elvin used an 18" bass. I finally had a chance to meet Elvin and Max and ask, "Why did you start using an 18" bass drum?" They said, "Well, we were on the road . . ."

TW: Yeah. You can put that thing in the back of the station wagon, and carry three or four toms.

RM: Anyway, I have never heard a trio recording that had a bass drum sound like the Great Jazz Trio recordings.

TW: Yeah, it's *there.* My drumming has gotten more percussive. That's why I lean towards electric-kinds of stuff, because it has impact. That's drumming. If you're a bass player and you like to play long notes, that's great, but I don't play an acoustic bass, so I'm not interested in that. I'm interested in the drums and I want to beat the shit out of them all the time. I'm a drummer and I want to express drums. I really think that the drums are as poetic and romantic as any instrument. Another thing I do is insist on not being penalized because 1 play drums. If you want me to do something—and this is for all drummers—don't let people treat you like that. Say you're in a band and everybody is getting $100. Don't let them say, "Hey, we've got to get transportation for the drums, so we can only pay you $75." Bullshit. Don't be penalized because you play the drums. When people call me for stuff, they pay me what I'm worth *and get* my drums there.

RM: They're probably renting the piano.

TW: Exactly. They're renting a piano,

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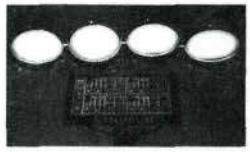

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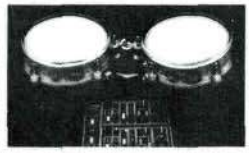

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and they're renting the hall. Pay me what I'm worth and then see that my drums get there. There are a lot of things that they don't do for drummers that we have to stick up for.

RM: For the technical minded, how do you tune the bass drum?

TW: I try to make all my drums have a tone and a nice resonance.

RM: Anything inside?

TW: I put a little pad in that's almost like a piece of carpet to absorb some of the twang that you get, because I really loosen the bass drum. It gets that sound you can feel in your chest. I like that. I put something in there for a short tone.

RM: Some drummers seem to concentrate more on cymbals, while others concentrate more on the drums. I've always felt that your approach seemed to integrate the two. How do you perceive the function of each?

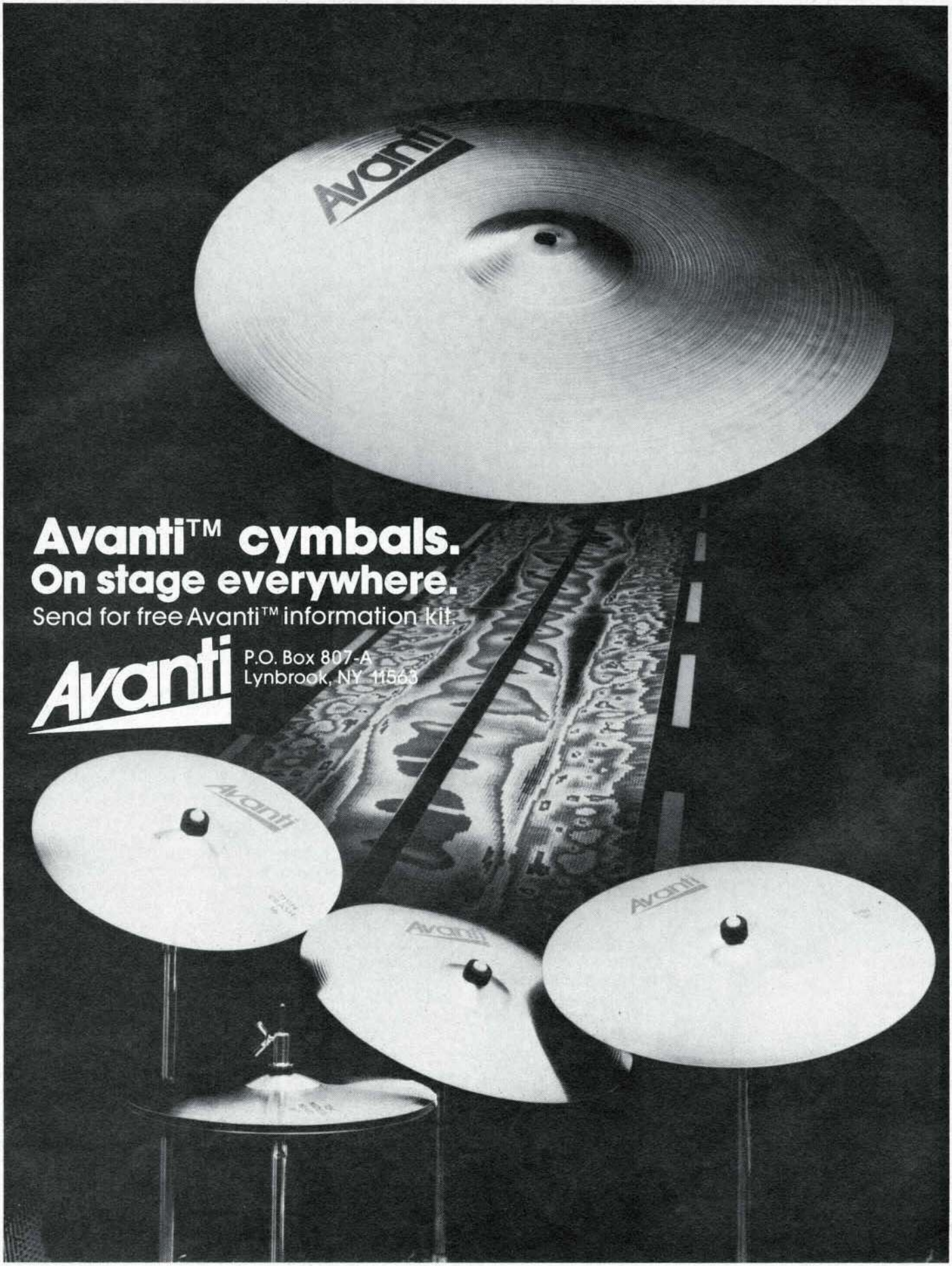
TW: Well, of course it can be different, depending on who you're playing with. Basically, the cymbals are the long tones, and they can provide the highlights and the shadings. And because the tone lasts longer, they can be used as background for the drums. But I try to use that both ways; sometimes I use the drums as backgrounds for the cymbals. I look at a lot of things that way. It's like reversing roles.

RM: From your experience as a teacher and clinician, are there any particular misconceptions that you keep running into about drums and drummers?

TW: There are a few of them. One of them is the matched grip. And I can't blame people because the traditional grip can seem very awkward to a beginner, but it's because no one's teaching it. I've been trying to write a book to show these things, because they're really easy to do. The only reason people don't play that way is because it appears to be awkward and it doesn't feel good in the beginning, which are valid reasons, but it doesn't have to be that way. Everyone I've taught how to do it has gotten it and said, "Wow, that's great." People say, "Well, I play matched grip because it's the same thing on both sides." I kind of knock all that down because I tell them that the reason I play the way I play is that I enjoy having a right and a left. That's part of life. When you have things that are opposite, they have to work together. If you try to make things the same, they become neuter. Matched grip is great as a tool, but my concept is alternatives. That's what I'm asking people to do. With traditional grip, there are certain things that the mind thinks of. When you're in matched grip, you won't think of these other things. When you turn your hand around, you'll think, "Oh, I'll do this other thing." There's the whole world there for you to learn, so why not learn it? It's like saying, "I'm going to be a piano player, but never in my life am I going to play an F." People should learn how to play rolls comfortably—single stroke, double stroke. They should learn these things to be drummers. People come to me who have already been playing. "How long have you been playing?" "Five years." I say, "Play me a roll." They can't play one, but they say, "Show me these licks—these polyrhythmic things you do." And this person can't play a roll.

RM: A lot of people seem to be looking for *the* thing that will solve all of their problems—*the* grip, *the* exercise, *the* book . . .

TW: That's what I'm talking about. In the '60s, rock 'n' roll exploded with the Beatles. Since then, everybody and his grandmother is a musician. It's great. It helps everyone tap into their own abilities as artists. Everybody is a songwriter; everybody plays an instrument. Wonderful, but if you want to be a drummer—this analogy is another one that I'm trying to get better at explaining. If you have a drumset in the room and the postman walks in, he will sit down and go "dat.dat, dat, do, do, do, buzz, buzz, buzz, bam, boom, boom." Anybody can do that and keep a beat. If you're really serious about drumming, don't you think that there's something more to it than that? There's a technique that really takes concentration, work, dedication, discipline and time. Right? But nobody thinks of that. Anyone can sit down and bang on the drums. My mother could come in here and bang on the drums. There must be more to it than that.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PHILLY JOE JONES—*Look Stop Listen.* Uptown UP 27.15. Philly Joe Jones: dr. J. Griffin: tn sx. D. Sickler: trp. V. Jones: trp. B. Powell: trb. F. Wess: al sx. C. Davis: tn sx. C. Payne: bar sx. W. Davis, Jr.: pno. L. Ridley: bs. *Look Stop And Listen / If You Could See Me Now / Choose Now / Focus / Killer Joe / Dial B For Beauty / Our Delight / Theme OfNo Repeat.*

A couple of years ago, Philly Joe Jones decided to form a group dedicated to playing the music of the late composer Tadd Dameron. It was an inspired idea. First of all, it gives new audiences a chance to hear this music, which deserves to be played. Second, it gave Philly Joe a chance to play music that he obviously enjoys, and which brings out the best in him. In return, Philly and his group, Dameronia, perform this music the way it should be performed, and the result is a swinging album that showcases both the music and the musicians. *RM*

REPERCUSSION UNIT—*Startime/Turkey* (EP). Robey Records Rob 5EP A/B. John Bergamo: dr, Jew's Harp, wndchms, bowed vbs. J. Hildebrandt: xyl, vbs, quicas, gongs. L. Stein: mrmb, syn, trsh can. G. Johnson: Vocorder, tabla, timp, gongs, perc, junk. L. Mosko: syn, mrmb, bells. Ed Mann: mrmba. C. Wheeler: fdl. S. Lewis: banjo. E. Bowen: gtr. R. Miller: syn. H. Budd: syn. *Turkey In The Grass / Startime / Boffondaghoul.*

Under the musical direction and inspiration of drummer John Bergamo, the Repercussion Unit offers an interesting experiment in avant-garde music using both tuned and rhythmic percussion as the *basis* for the composition, rather than as *support* for it. The three tunes on this EP range from a "Cloggeresque Texas Two-Step," to a melodic mood piece, to a very New Wave Jazz work, featuring quick changes in color and meter, and highlighting a duel between Mann on marimba and Hildebrandt on quicas. This is music that is both musically listenable and conceptually exciting—a romp through the possibilities for composition and performance afforded by an enthusiastic, innovative, and uninhibited percussion ensemble. *RVH*

MORAZ-BRUFORD—*Music For Piano And Drums.* Editions EG EGED33. P. Moraz: piano. Bill Bruford: drums. *Children's Concerto / Living Space / Any Suggestions / Eastern Sundays / Blue Brains / Symmetry / Galatea / Hazy.*

Bill Bruford has always been one to make the most of his possibilities, and one of the ways he has developed his ability to do that is by putting restrictions on himself. For example, by agreeing not to use cymbals at one point, he was forced to exploit the drums to see what he could get out of them. Over the past few years, his setup has become diverse, incorporating such things as Simmons drums and log drums. But on this record, he decided to rediscover a basic drumset with a few cymbals. The results are impressive. He and Patrick Moraz—who limits himself to acoustic piano—explore their instruments and themselves, coming up with a variety of textures, moods and stylings. Bruford demonstrates more technique than you might have realized that he possesses, but he uses it tastefully throughout. If you've ever thought that a basic drumset was limiting, let Bruford show you that imagination is what breaks through those limits. *RM*

MICKEY HART, AIRTO, FLORA PURIM—*Dafos.* Reference Recordings, Ltd. RR-12. Mickey Hart, Airto, Flora Purim, Jose Lorenzo, Mario Abruzzo, Carlos Gomez, Jorge Perez, Renee Macay, Henry Flood, Marcos Antonio Dias, Shabda Kahn, Daniel Kennedy, Mica Katz, Khadija Mastah, Ray Patch: perc. S. Douglas: wdwnds. B. Vega: bs. *Dry Sands Of The Desert / Saudacao Popular / Ice Of The North / Reunion / Subterranean Caves Of Kronos / The Gates Of Dafos / Passage.*

The liner notes describe this as "a celebration of percussion music," and it certainly is that. The two main stars here are Mickey Hart, who displays his talents on everything from berimbau, to gamelan, to "The Beast," and the record itself, which was recorded with state-of-the-art techniques, giving the instruments a very realistic sound quality. Overall, the record has a jungle feel to it, and anyone who likes drums should find it enjoyable. *RE*

KENNY G—G *Force.* Arista AL8-8192. Kenny G: sx, fl, Lyricon, syn, perc. W. Brathwaite: syn, bs, perc. Kashif: syn, dr, bs, kybds, perc. Omar Hakim: dr. Leslie Ming: dr. Yogi Horton: dr. M. McClain: gtr. I. Siegal: gtr. S. Horton: gtr. J. Lorber: kybds. B. Eastmond: kybds. P. Jones: kybds. Bashiri Johnson: perc. Steve Kroon: perc. P. Scherer: synclvr. B. Johnson: Id vcl. L. Thomas, B.J. Nelson, S. Horton, La La, Y. Lee, F. Jackson, Jan & Angle: bkgrnd vcls. *Hi, How Ya Doin'? / I've Been Missin' You / Tribeca / G Force / Do Me Right / 1 Wanna Be Yours / Sunset At Noon / Help Yourself To My Love.*

Kenny G is a young saxophonist who has combined elements of jazz with contemporary R&B to create an album that covers a lot of territory. It is good listening or dancing music, at once innovative and commercially approachable. Highlighting the album is the drumming of Omar Hakim. Although not on all the cuts, Omar's presence is immediately felt where he does appear. While almost all of the drumming on this album is straight, disco-esque R&B, Omar's

tracks seem to have a "lift" to their groove, due largely to his tasty hi-hat work. The other drummers are competent and their drumming is commercially hip and "in the pocket." However, in contrast to Omar, they tend to be a bit plodding. *RVH*

JAMEY HADDAD—*Names.* Anada Records. J. Haddad:dr, perc. J. Lovano: tn & sp sx, fl. B. Drewes: al, tn & sp sx. K. Werner: pno. M. Johnson: bs. B. deArango: gtr. Ramnad Raghavan: hand dr. P. deMudd: vcl. *Punktree / Bob Brookmeyer / Ragarango / On The Way Home / Waltz For Lorraine / For Joey Love.*

With the exception of one song, these tunes are basically straight-ahead small group jazz. The exception is "Ragarango," a driving composition using Lebanese and Nigerian percussion instruments, underneath a Weather Report-influenced arrangement. Haddad's drumming is fine, and on "Ragarango" he shows many influences. *WFM*

JAN GARBAREK GROUP—*Wayfarer.* ECM23798-1. J. Garbarek: tn sx, sp sx. B. Frisell: gtr. E. Weber: bs. Michael DiPasqua: dr, perc. *Gesture / Wayfarer / Gentle / Pendulum / Spor / Singsong.*

The music here varies between impressionistic and mainstream. Drummer DiPasqua handles both well, but is especially effective when laying down an energetic groove. It's too bad he wasn't given more of a chance to play on this *disc.RE*

PAT TRAVERS—*Hot Shot.* Polydor 7017-KP. P. Travers: gtr, org, vcl. D. Kiswiney: bs, vcl. P. Cowling: bs. J. Jelf, J. Riggs: bkgrnd vcls. John Thorpe, Pat Marchino, Don Brewer: dr, vcl. / *Gotta Fight / Killer / Just Try Talking (To Those Dudes) / Hot Shot / Women On The Edge Of Love / In The Heat Of The Night / Louise / Tonight / Night Into Day.*

This is a hard-rock album by a rocker from way back. Travers doesn't need chains and makeup to be heavy; the power is in the playing. And when Travers joins forces with veteran rocker Don Brewer on drums (Brewer is best remembered for driving Grand Funk Railroad), you get professional, quality hard rock. Brewer's playing is tight, solid and tasty, with a nice interplay between the drums and bass, and occasionally between the drums and lead guitar line. Brewer's drum *sound* is also excellent—round and powerful. John Thorpe is featured on tunes that are a bit more new wave in concept, and his drumming is solid and straightforward. Unfortunately, Pat Marchino suffers by comparison on two counts: First, he appears on two other new wave-esque tracks on which the band's playing sounds rushed, forced, and out of character; second, the production of these two tracks is noticeably poorer where the drums are concerned.

This album is a one-stop education in acceptable versus excellent rock playing, and poor versus great drum production, all thanks to the presence of Don Brewer. *RVH*

RED RODNEY & IRA SULLIVAN QUINTET—*Sprint.* Elektra-Musician 60261-1. J. Anderson: bs. I. Sullivan: al & sp sx, al fl. R. Rodney: flghn. Jeff Hirshfield: dr. G. Dial: pno. *How Do You Know / As Time Goes By / Sprint / My Son, The Minstrel / Speak Like A Child.*

Small group jazz is at its best live. Rodney and Sullivan are veterans in the mainstream tradition who know how to make it happen. This album combines fine charts with fine soloists. The compositions are played with authority, and the ensemble lays down some fine grooves for the soloists. Jeff Hirshfield on drums plays some tasteful solos, some fine brushes, and some "burning" tempos. Catch the title track! Well recorded (especially for a live performance) and musically satisfying, this album is highly recommended for a lesson in tasteful, small group jazz drumming. *WFM*

KENNY WHEELER—*Double, Double You.* ECM 25000-1E K. Wheeler: trp, flghn. M. Brecker: tn sx. J. Taylor: pno. D. Holland: bs. Jack DeJohnette: dr. *Foxy Trot / Ma Bel / W.W. / Three For D'reen-Blue For Lou-Mark Time.*

This is a great band, and the material does them justice. In particular, DeJohnette plays his butt off. As usual, he adapts to each soloist, but don't take that to mean that he simply follows them around. Rather, he provides a foundation to work from which simultaneously supports and motivates each musician. And when it's Jack's turn to solo, he lets loose as only he can. This is definitive mainstream drumming for the '80s. *RM*

STEVE TIBBETTS–*Safe Journey.* ECM 1-25002. S. Tibbetts: gtr, kalimba, tapes. Marc Anderson: congas, steel drum, perc. B. Hughes: bs. T. Wienhold: vase. Steve Cochrane: tabla. *Test / Climbing / Running / Night Again / My Last Chance / Vision / Any Minute / Burning Up / Going Somewhere.*

Along with writing the material, as well as playing guitar and kalimba, Steve Tibbetts engineered this album. Being involved in this recording at so many levels has helped Tibbetts to come up with a very satisfying work. His compositions, combining percussion instruments from many different genres with guitar, bass, and tape effects, use an interesting mixture of electronic and acoustic textures. The percussionists (Anderson and Cochrane) complement the many different emotions involved in these compositions with some improvisational and creative sounds from their instruments, yet use these sounds to create an ensemble effect, as opposed to "standing out." *Safe Journey* is a very unique album which demonstrates sensitive percussion techniques with sensitive compositions. *WFM*

LISTENER'S GUIDE

David Garibaldi

Q. For readers who 'd like to listen to albums that most represent your drumming, which ones would you recommend?

Album	Artist	Label	Catalog #
Tower Of Power	Tower Of Power	Warner Bros.	2681
Back To Oakland	Tower Of Power	Warner Bros.	2749
Urban Renewal	Tower Of Power	Warner Bros.	out of print
In The Slot	Tower Of Power	Warner Bros.	out of print
Live And In Living Color	Tower Of Power	Warner Bros.	2924
Everything You've Heard Is True	Tom Johnston	Warner Bros.	3304

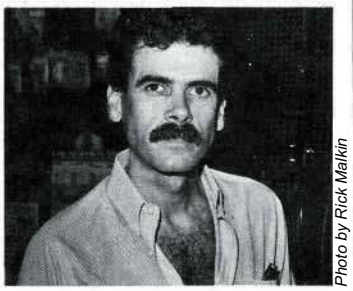

Photo by Rick Malkin

Q. Which records do you listen to most for inspiration ?

Album	Artist	Drummer	Label	Catalog #
The Leprechaun	Chick Corea	Steve Gadd	Polydor	6062
Four And More	Miles Davis	Tony Williams	Columbia	PC 9253
Million Dollar Legs	Tony Williams Lifetime	Tony Williams	Columbia	out of print
Natty Dread	Bob Marley & The Wailers	Carlton Barrett	Island	9281
Primal Roots	Sergio Mendez & Brasil '77	Claudio Slon	A&M	4353

Carmine Appice

Q. For readers who 'd like to listen to albums that most represent your drumming, which ones would you recommend?

Album	Artist	Label	Catalog #
Beck, Bogert & Appice	Beck, Bogert & Appice	Epic	32140
Carmine Appice	Carmine Appice	Pasha	out of print
Near The Beginning	Vanilla Fudge	Atco	out of print
One Way Or Another	Cactus	Atco	out of print
Foot Loose And Fancy Free	Rod Stewart	Warner Bros.	3092
Blondes Have More Fun	Rod Stewart	Warner Bros.	3261
Nugent	Ted Nugent	Epic	PE-33692
Foolish Behaviour	Rod Stewart	Warner Bros.	HS-3485
Renaissance	Vanilla Fudge	Atco	out of print
Restrictions	Cactus	Atco	out of print

Q. Which records do you listen to most for inspiration ?

A. The albums listed below are the ones I feel would be of value to other drummer/percussionists.

Album	Artist	Drummer	Label	Catalog #
Rich Vs. Roach	Buddy Rich & Max Roach	Buddy Rich & Max Roach	Mercury	Expr-1016
Award Winning Drummer	Max Roach	Max Roach	Time	T-7003
Krupa And Rich	Gene Krupa & Buddy Rich	Gene Krupa & Buddy Rich	Verve	68484
Original Drum Battle				
Ghost In The Machine	Police	Stewart Copeland	A&M	3730
Led Zeppelin	Led Zeppelin	John Bonham	Atlantic	19126
Hello, I Must Be Going	Phil Collins	Phil Collins	Atlantic	80035

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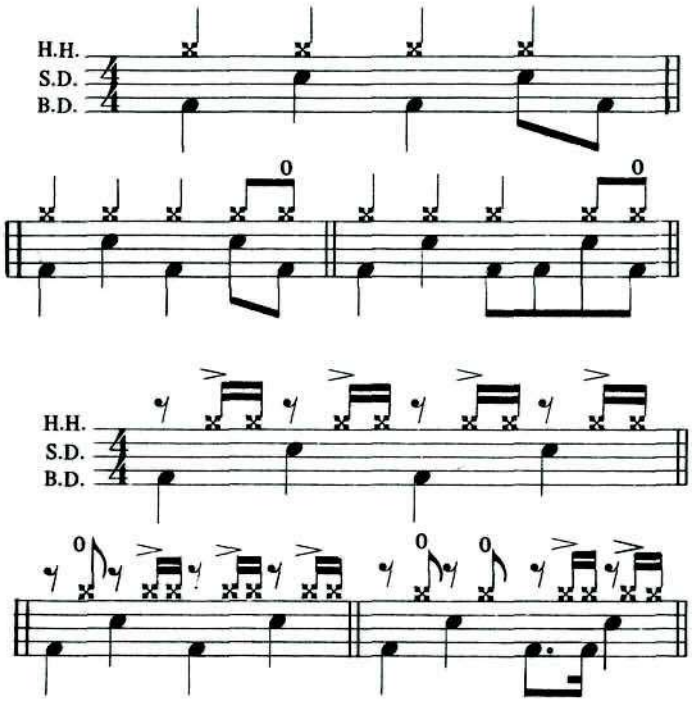
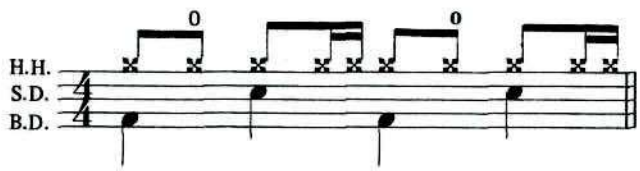
by Michael Bettine

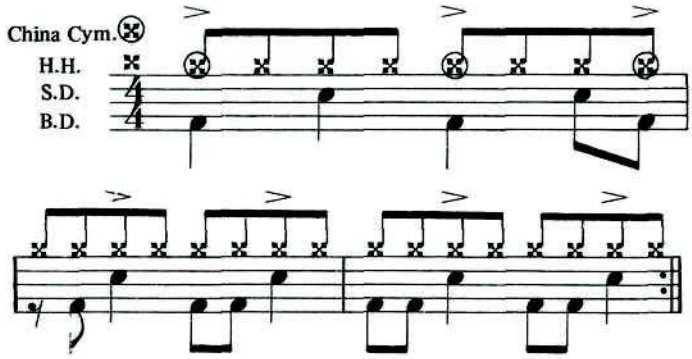
Style & Analysis: Simon Phillips

The name Simon Phillips has been popping up steadily over the past few years on records from such diverse artists as jazz-rockers Stanley Clarke and Jeff Beck, to heavy metal acts like Judas Priest and Michael Schenker. As a talented and versatile drummer, he is always in demand for sessions and tours.

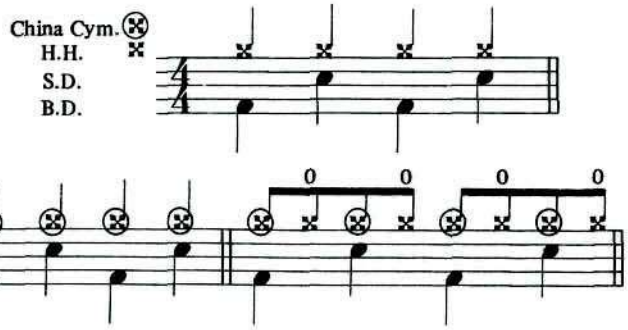
While Simon is an amazing technician, his playing is not an endless barrage of rolls and fills. Instead, most of it is very simple and straight ahead. The following two transcriptions are taken from Pete Townsend's album, *Empty Glass.* The first is from "Let My Love Open The Door" and the second is from "And I Moved." While both examples are basic beats, Simon puts a lot of energy and feeling behind them.

The next three transcriptions are from Jeff Beck's album, *There And Back.* The first is taken from "Too Much To Lose," and again Simon keeps his playing simple, but tight and driving.



In the following three-bar phrase from "El Becko," Simon kicks the band with heavy accents.

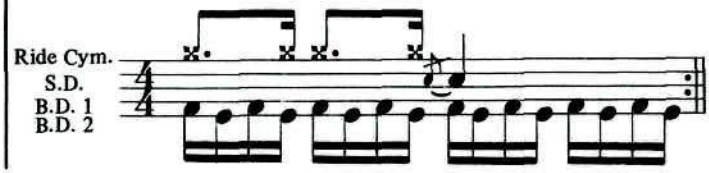


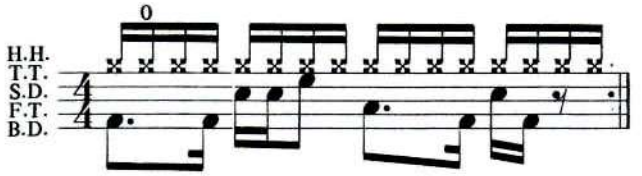
The following example shows a progression of three beats from "The Pump." As the song goes along, Simon helps build it to a climax. The effect he creates is one of dynamic tension. While he's playing very simply, you know that at any moment he can explode into a knockout fill. This is the same type of effect you get by compressing a spring. You know that when you let it go the spring will go flying.

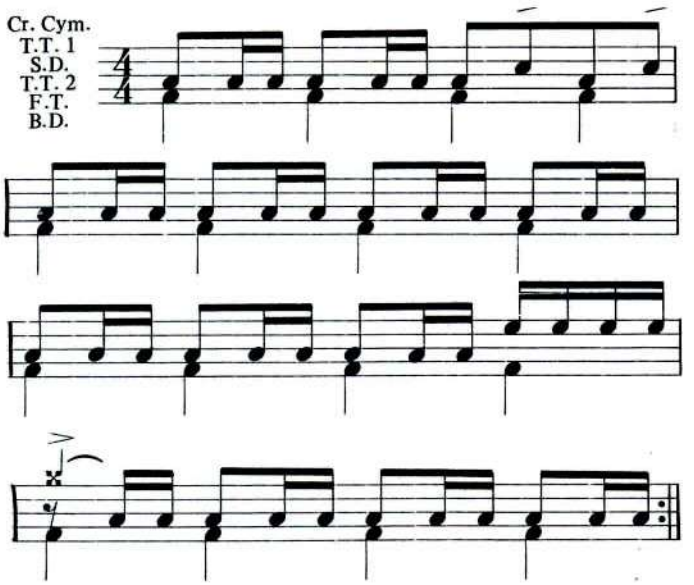


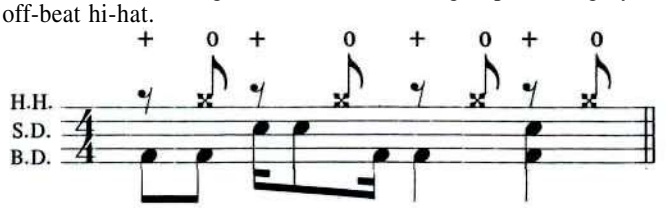
The next four examples are from the title song of the album, *Crises,* by Mike Oldfield (of *Tubular Bells* fame). This long piece ebbs and flows, with Simon changing throughout. The first passage is another example of creating tension. Simon plays this very slowly and deliberately. You can sense the drum part building to a climactic part of the song.

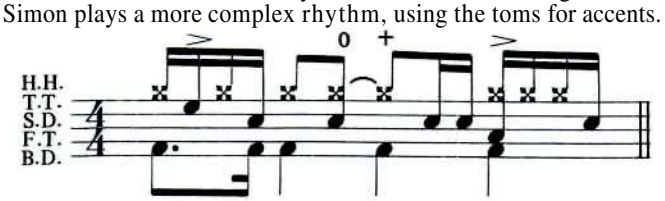
The second passage has a simple ride/snare pattern on top of a driving double bass rhythm. You get a sense of urgency from the bass drums, yet retain the tension from the ride/snare figure that builds up to the final climax and end of the song.

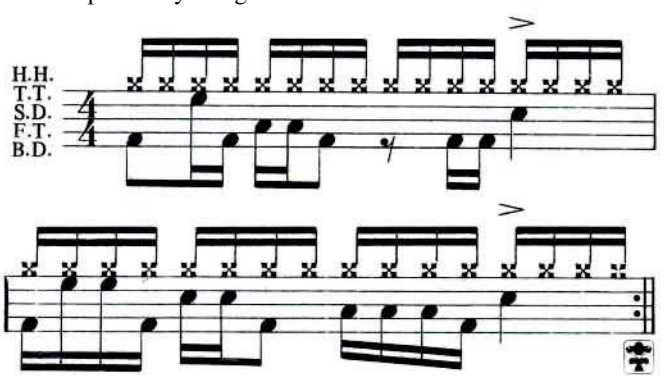


The following passage shows the advantage of Simon's left-handed technique. While the left hand plays the hi-hat, the right is free to play the snare and toms.

Shown below is a four-bar phrase played on the floor tom. The accents are on the snare with a rising small-tom fill leading into a cymbal crash at the beginning of the fourth bar.



The next three examples are from Simon's work with English singer/actress Toyah Wilcox. Her music is very modern and energetic, with the drums often being the heart of the song. The first two passages come from the live album, *Warrior Rock.* The first is from "Good Morning Universe," a fast song kept moving by the off-beat hi-hat.

The second is from "Castaways." This is also a fast song on which Simon plays a more complex rhythm, using the toms for accents.



The following example is from a song titled "Stand Proud," on the EP, *Four More From Toyah,* and again shows Simon's left-handed technique. The right hand gives a melodic quality to the two-bar phrase by using the snare and toms.

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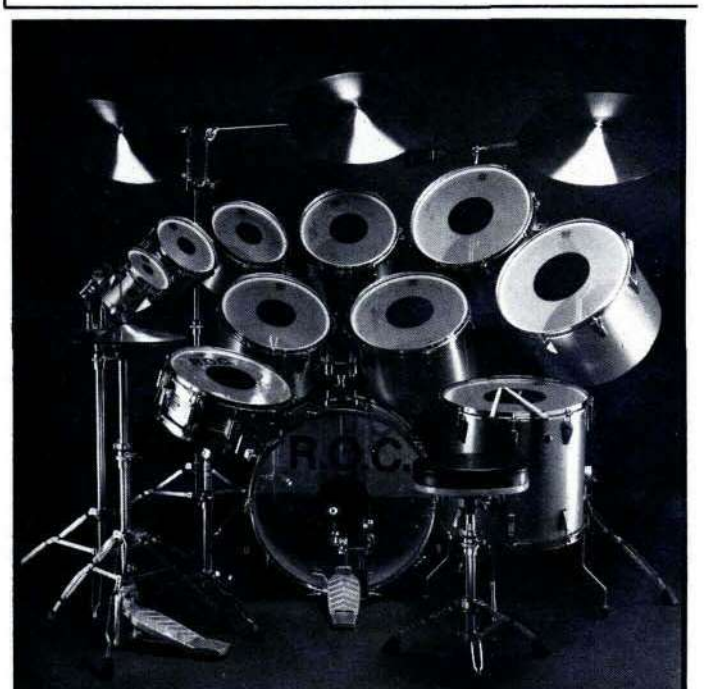

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Photo by Rick Mattingly

Wilcox continued from page 17

only I knew all this stuff." Now I know all this stuff, but all of a sudden I'm back at zero again and I say, "Now there's all *this* stuff to know." That's the eternal challenge. That's part of the excitement and the frustration. 1 realize that that's always going to be there. It's never going to be finished.

RF: What are some of the pros of working together in the studio with people you know so well?

WW: We really joke around. It's amazing because the morale is incredibly high for a band that has been together this long. We've been through a lot. When you're in a band, you're married and you start to know all the stuff about each individual, every aspect, musically, emotionally, egotistically, and that stuff settles. Occasionally, people ruffle their feathers and have their own cloud of dust, but after the dust settles, you kind of know where their boundaries are. You don't know that in a studio situation where you're meeting people for the first time and maybe the only time. But that has its own excitement too and that produces its own demand.

RF: You likened being in a band to a marriage, and sometimes after a while, maybe some of the passion leaves and is replaced by comfort. But comfort has its negative aspects as well as its pleasures. Do you feel that you can continue to grow or do you find you have to push yourself to grow?

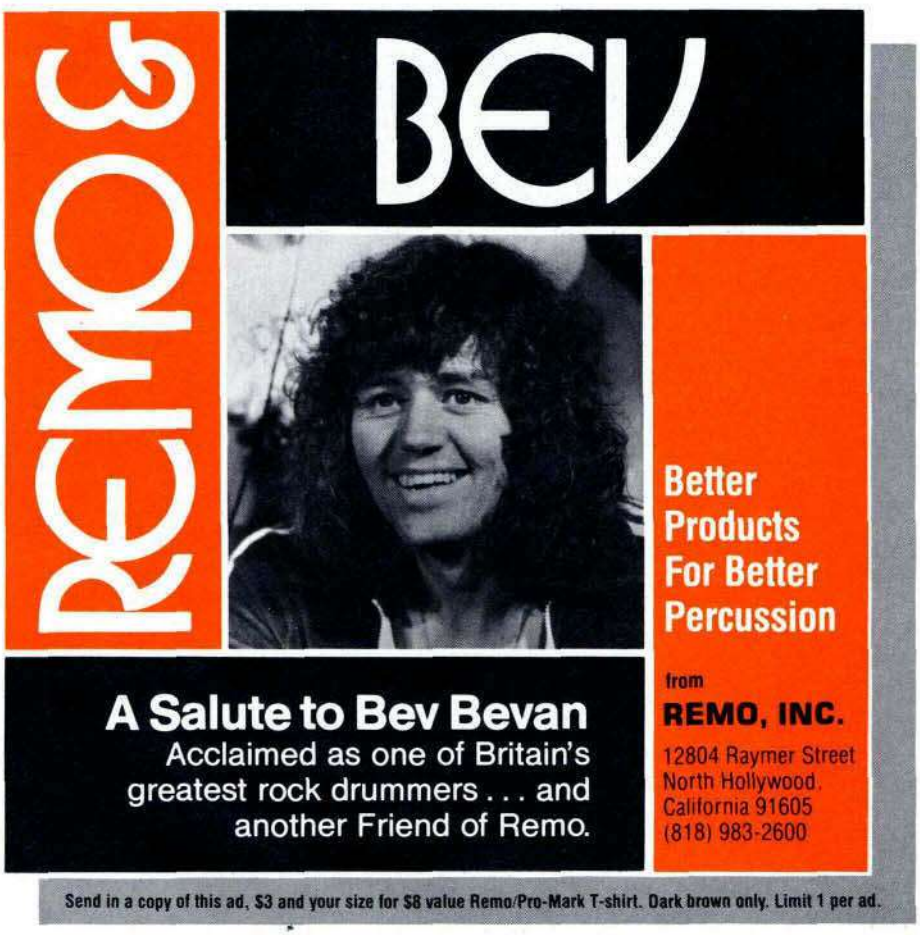
WW: Personally, I'm always pushing myself anyway. I'm my own worst enemy in that aspect, so whether the band situation pushes me or not, I'll do it to myself. Maybe that's my saving grace in the situation. Everybody in the band is like that. Having interests outside Utopia kind of keeps kindling that. The band concept is almost like the grand studio concept. You can draw the parallel that we never jam or get together socially except on occasion, and that's had its advantages and disadvantages too. If we were a jamming-type band, I think the music would be a bit different than what it is. It's a very different situation than I've ever been involved in. I have a lot of friends who are in bands and that's what they do full time. They are putting their energy into that band, and the members spend the better part of each year thinking about that situation or taking the time to make that record and playing together, whether they're on the road all the time or not. They'll go out on the road, play their tunes, get them tight, and then go into the studio and record. We never do that. Our approach is always more—I don't want to say calculated because it makes the situation sound sterile, but in a sense it is—calculated inasmuch as we go in and it's like a laboratory. We go in there, write sections of music and put the situation together. Then we go out and tour. It's fairly business oriented to a degree. The part that isn't business oriented is that we don't write totally commercial music. So it's funny. It's a calculated assembly of production, but what we're assembling isn't calculated.

RF: Since you have known each other for eight years, you can't help but have a bond that transcends business.

WW: Even though we don't hang out all the time, there's a bond that develops through time. What that bond is, I can't even venture to say, but there is a bond.

RF: How did you get involved in Utopia initially?

WW: Todd had produced the *War Babies* album for Hall & Oates when I was in that band. Daryl and John used Todd's bass player, John Siegler, and Todd to produce the album. John and I became tight as a rhythm section. We really enjoyed each other's playing and became friends. Uto-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pia was an assembled band at that time with one album out, and they were replacing their drummer. John had talked to me about it when I was playing the Bette Midler show, *Clams On The Half Shell,* and we had done a pre-Broadway week in Philadelphia. I went back to my hotel one night and there was a note in my mailbox that said, "Welcome to Utopia." John Siegler had called to say I was going to be in the band. When the Bette Midler show went to New York, it was a very crazy time, but I loved it. I like being really busy, and when I'm not, I go crazy. I was doing the Utopia rehearsals from about 12:00 noon to 6:00 P.M., and the Bette Midler show was at 7:30 or 8:00 until 11:00. Then from 12:30 to 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning I was recording her album, *Songs For The New Depression.* That went on for about two or three weeks.

RF: When we had talked about that time previously, you said that got you to a point where you didn't even want to look at the drums anymore.

WW: I was just kind of OD'd. I was fried. It's funny, though, when you get fried, some good things happen. There's a fine line there. There's a whole creative moment involved in the frying period, which is really good. You're only fried at one point and then you burn to a crisp, which is when you can't function anymore. But during that fried period, there's actually a creative high before you do your final entering into space and disintegrating.

RF: What do you do in the burn-to-a-crisp period?

WW: You just do things to get away—sit in a corner to think. You just need time. Anything becomes interesting, like taking walks. Any kind of diversion from what you do normally becomes relaxing. The silliest things can become entertaining and exciting.

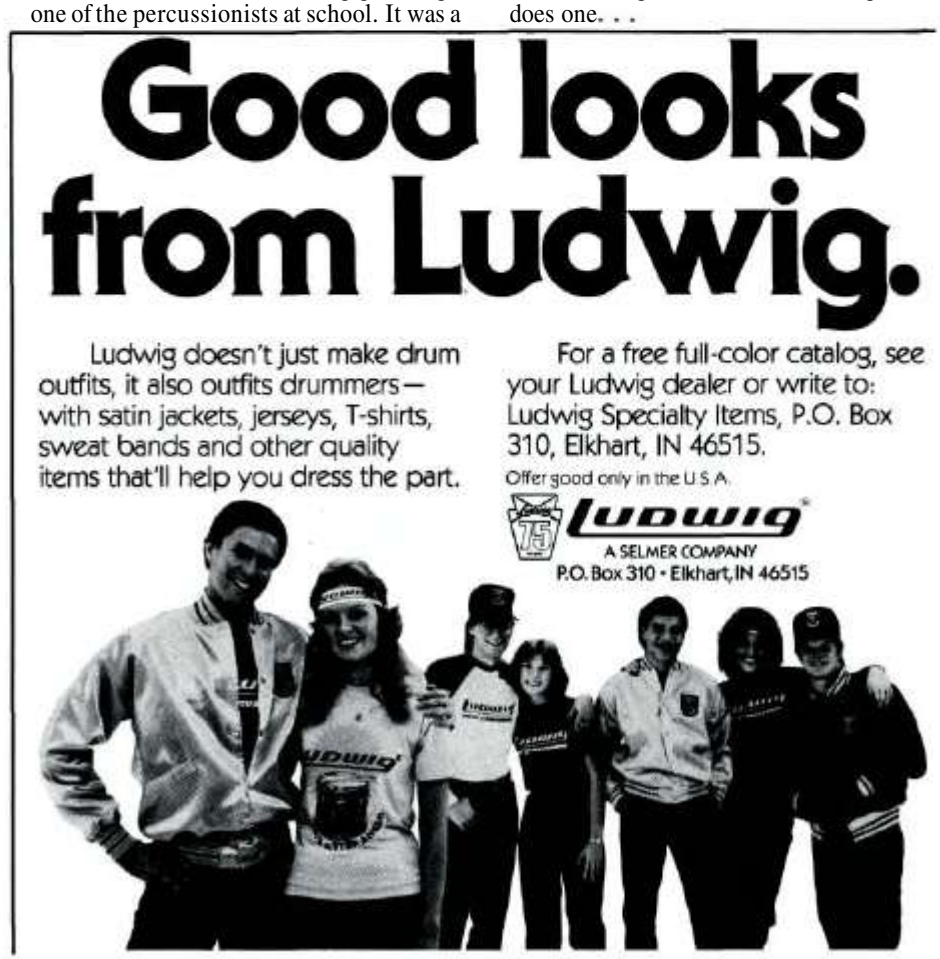
RF: What was it like working in *Clams On The Half Shell?*

WW: It was exciting. It was my first *real* experience working with a lot of heavy players in a big band. Jerald Jemmott of Aretha Franklin fame was in the band, and that was very exciting because I've always been a real R&B fan. I play some bass although I'm not an incredible bass player, but at that time, I was really involved with the bass and Jerald Jemmott was one of my heroes. I learned a lot about playing bass from him.

I really love Bette. She's a real sensitive woman. I think some people have found her crazy to work with because she's so artistic and demanding in a certain sense, but we always got along really well. It's amazing when she sings a ballad because she has so much feeling. When you listen to her, you want to cry because she's crying. She's actually feeling the words. I love that sensitivity because the music transcends the players playing and the singers singing. You're interpreting, which is the real art. Then it doesn't matter how complicated or simplistic the execution is of whatever technical thing is happening at the time. The end result is that magic, and that magic can occur whether you're playing a thousand notes a minute or one every minute. That's the whole essence of what's happening. That's one thing I really liked about that situation. They had horns, a 20-piece band, and we did some Gospelish music in the show, ballads, and rock 'n' roll stuff. Then Lionel Hampton had his portion of the show, and I was the drummer for his band also. We did "Hampton's Boogie" and all his great stuff, which was wonderful.

My ambition was to be a jazz player. 1 started playing when I was about 13. Until I was about 21, I did nothing but listen to jazz records and emulate all the jazz drummers. That was it. The scary part of the story was that, when I got the gig, the musical director, who I knew very well, said he knew 1 could play rock 'n' roll and jazz, but he didn't know if I could play in a big band situation. And I said, "Sure, no problem." Well, the truth was that I had never played in a big band, and this was the second time this had happened to me. The first time was at the Concord Hotel when I was going to the Manhattan School of Music. I was trying to finance my way through school and I wanted to play at the same time. I had heard about this gig through one of the percussionists at school. It was a show band with about eight horns. I had to read the charts and there were no rehearsals. I had to go out and play cold. So I met the man. I was about 19 and the other musicians were all about 35 or 40 years old. They had been playing in those mountains since they were babies. The guy asked if I had played in shows before and I said, "Sure, no problem." I did the first show and I got the most incredible headache that I had ever gotten. The funniest thing was that, in the first show I played, there were dancers spinning and doing all their moves. The drums started off for the first eight bars and the chart said, "Very fast." Well, I had been practicing to be able to play fast. "Very fast," to me, meant almost as fast as I could play. I was really nervous about the situation, so my "very fast" was faster than I had ever played. I started out the first eight bars and the dancers started dancing. They were trying to dance and at the same time turn around to say it was too fast. When they finished, they were sweating buckets. The dancers said to the bandleader, "What is your drummer trying to do? Kill us? Is he crazy?" It hadn't seemed fast to me, because I was so nervous. That was my first experience playing a show. The next situation was with Bette Midler, and I had never played in a big band.

RF: It's one thing to read a chart and it's another thing to make a band swing. How does one. . .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WW: How does one do that? That's the question I was asking myself as we started to do the rehearsals. I was always very conscious of time. I had been studying with a teacher by the name of Jim Blackley for the last couple of years, and we had been working with a metronome in all different times from the slowest to the fastest. Obviously, for a drummer, time is the big trip, right? So I was very aware of that. I thought I had it fairly under control in all the other situations I had encountered. But all of a sudden I had this big band, and here were these saxophone players who were laying back way behind the beat, which they're famous for doing. This isn't a dig against saxophone players, but it's fairly true. Also, I found out that the saxophone players were playing off the drummer, and it was the first time people were using me to groove. When you've never done that before, your tendency is to slow down, because when they're doing these emotional, dynamic kinds of lines, you're listening to them and you're getting emotionally involved. You want to feel the feeling that they're playing, but it doesn't work because you're slowing down. It became a little bit of a problem. It was a very pressured situation because I was fairly young—about 20—and there were all these heavy New York studio players in the band. Just playing with all these people was enough to make me nervous about the situation. Then, taking it upon myself to do something that I had never done before made it worse. But I've always been like that and had the attitude that, "If I'm not going to do it now, I'm never going to do it, so I'll just do it. I'm going to get the experience somewhere, so I might as well get it here." I did it and after a while I got the hang of it. It's been a while now and I can't really say what I found out, but I think you just become stronger within yourself as a person. You have all those doubts about yourself as an up-and-coming player, but it's all just a part of the maturity process as a musician. When I was younger, I played a lot of different things that I don't play now, and some of those things, I wish I did play now. You forget about those things, but what does develop, I think, is a more well-founded sense of being within yourself as a person, which has more to do with playing than being technically proficient. You just become a bit more settled as a person. I've found that, as I have gotten older, I've become a little more settled. I believe in myself a bit more, so that sense develops.

I think it's really important to develop yourself as a person. Everybody gets so wrapped up in playing and talking about drums, paradiddles, and the latest and best equipment that's available. That's all secondary.

The more consideration you give to your life as a human being, the better you'll be able to do what you do, the more you'll be able to give to other people, and the more you'll be able to share. When you're playing music, you're communicating with the people you're playing with. How can you communicate music when you're not in communication with yourself? That covers a lot of aspects of our lives—the spiritual aspects, although I'm not heavily into *religious* spiritualism. It's more of a spiritualism of the soul. And that has to do with egos, emotions and dealing with people.

I'm coproducing Kasim Sulton's album, helping him write for it, and I'll be helping him put the players together. I think that awareness comes into play very quickly being a producer. When you're working with artists, you're writing and working with them. Those people are complicated systems. They are trying to write a song and they have their careers at stake. They're trying to do something that hasn't been done before, and at the same time, they are sitting with you and you're trying to help them find themselves. Having the intuitive vision to be able to be with somebody and bring out the best in that person is a good quality to develop. That's what I'm after—the music. I'm not after "Willie Wilcox wrote this part of the song." I like helping other people in terms of production, and even playing-wise. That may be why I haven't been driven to do anything on my own as a solo artist, because one of the things I enjoy doing the most is working with other artists and making them be the best that they can be. I think that's directly linked to that whole development as a person.

RF: Back to the Bette Midler situation, there's a difference between making a big band swing and being the bottom of a rock 'n' roll band.

WW: That's true. In particular, there's a big difference between rock 'n' roll and jazz playing. With swing music, the time is on the top, and it's in the cymbal and that type of concept. It's totally different from rock playing. It's just something that I grew into in the situation. I finally found out what made it work and then it became a ball. All of a sudden, there were all these textures, all these sounds, all these musicians and it was this overwhelming party.

RF: What is fascinating to me is that you have a real love of jazz and a foundation in that, but Utopia is what I would call a pop-rock band, and much of the material you write is R&B oriented. Where does your heart actually lie, or does it really and truly lie in all those things?

WW: My problem is that I love music. That's kind of a sappy statement, but that's my problem. I love heavy metal and would love to be in a heavy metal band. I wouldn't want to do it all the time, but I love playing that. I like playing the Utopia stuff, but I also love to play R&B. I like to write songs, and sing sometimes. I like to do it all. The one thing on the down side of my situation is that somebody can't say,

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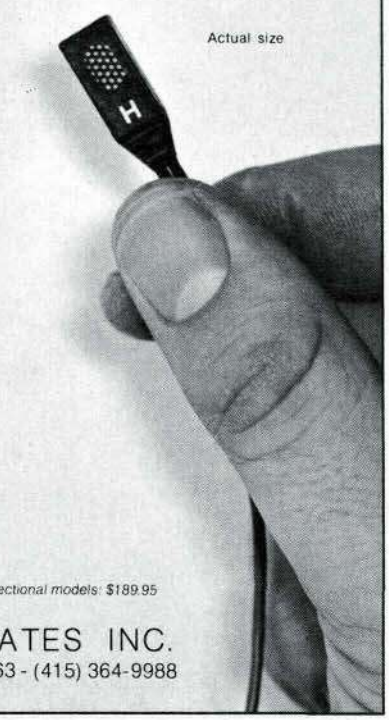

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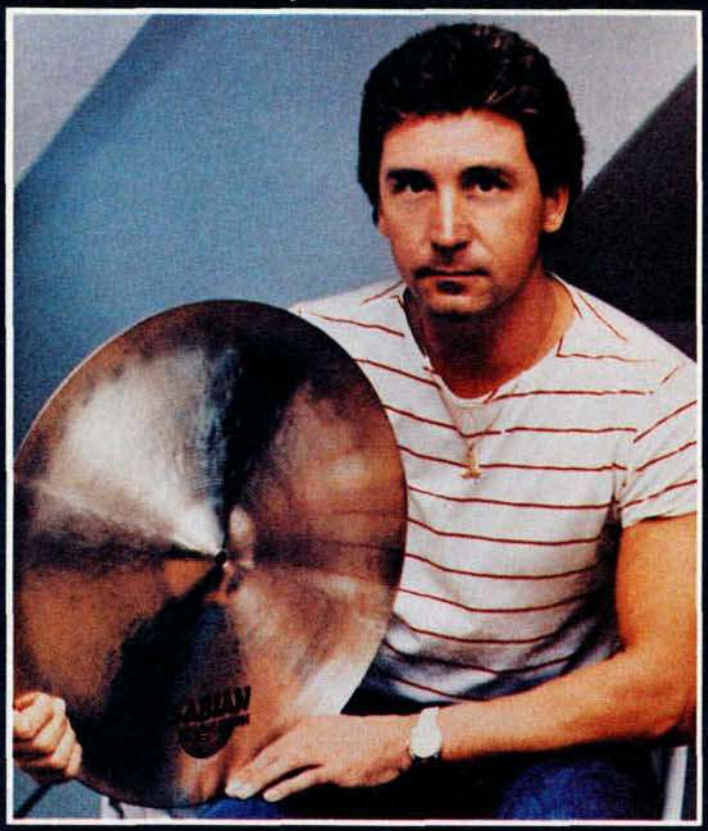
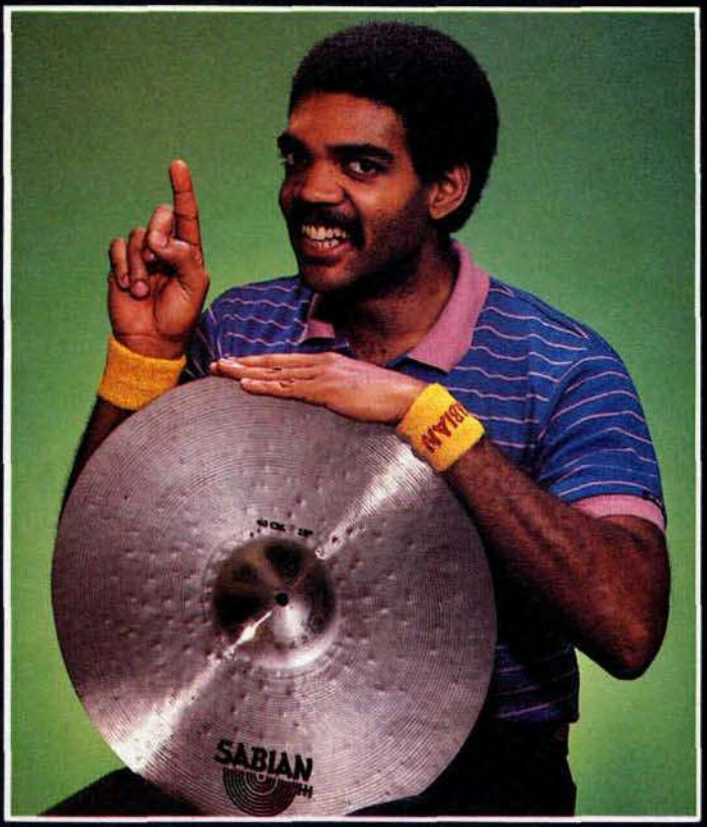
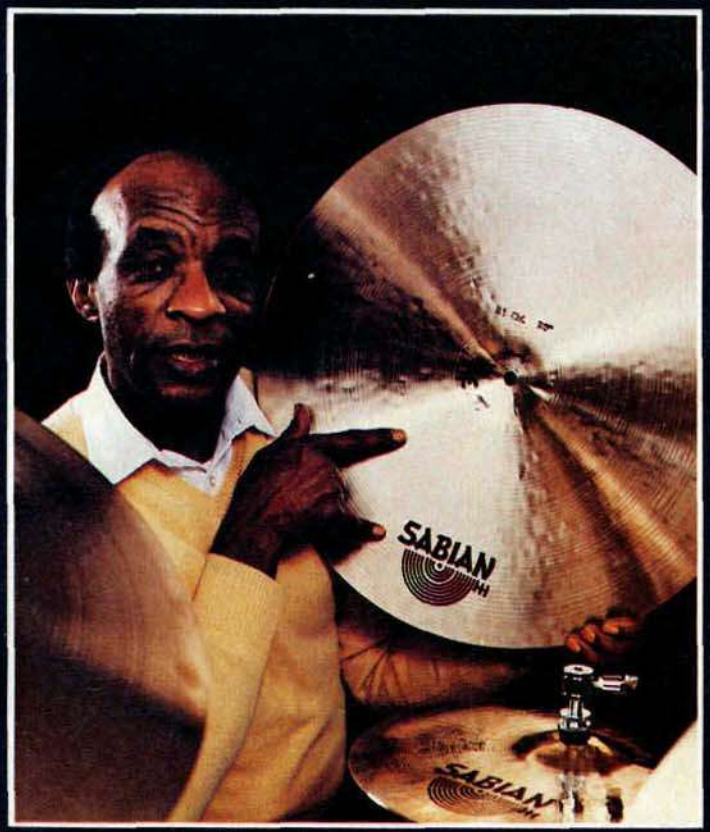
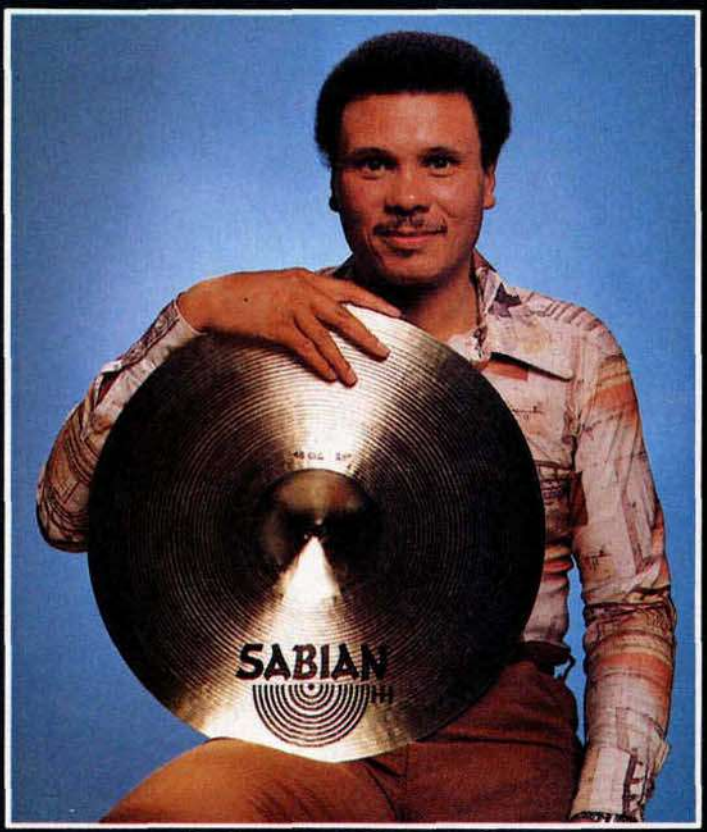


Gerry Brown/Lionel Richie





Ed Thigpen/artist, educator, author



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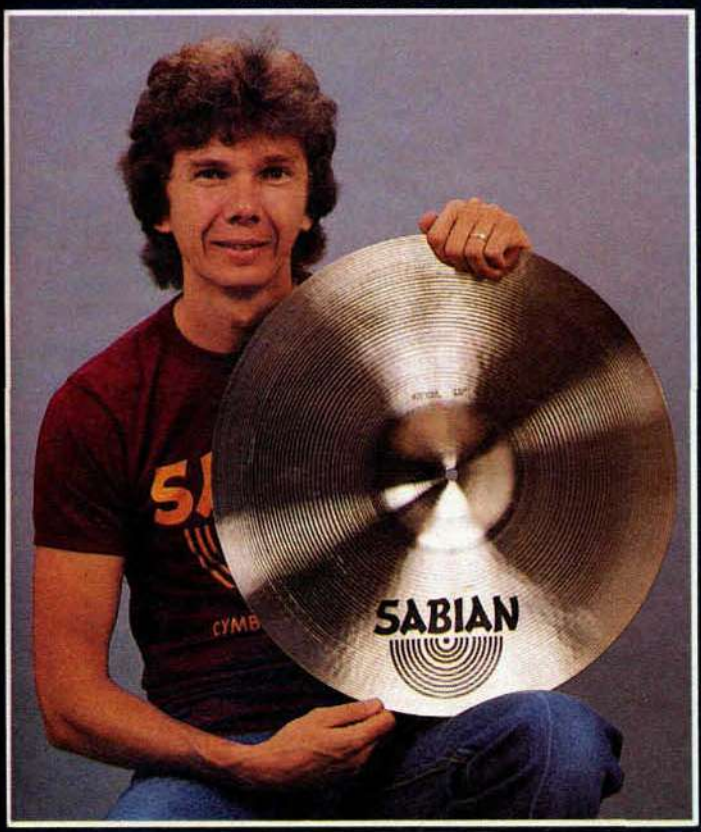

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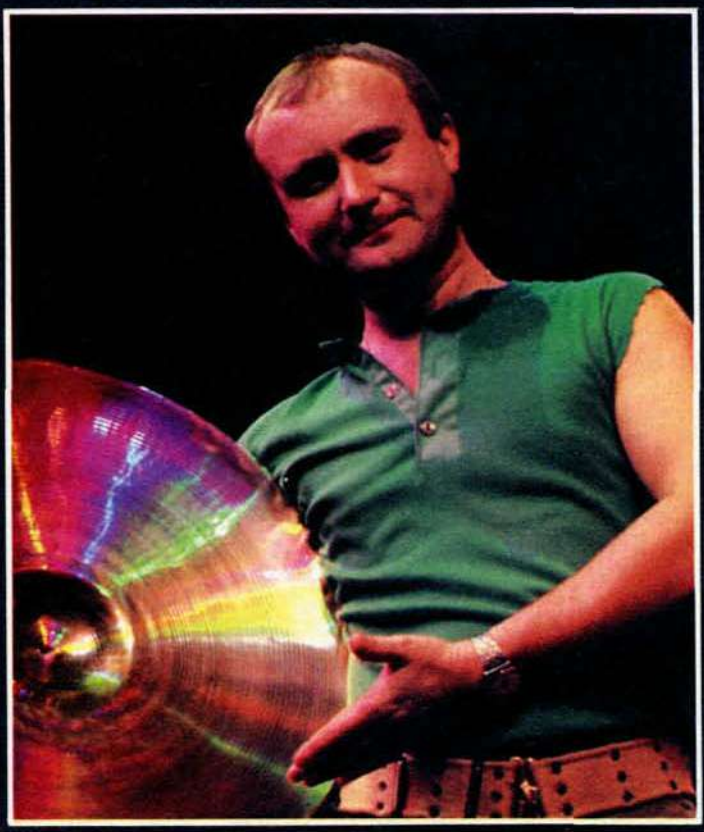

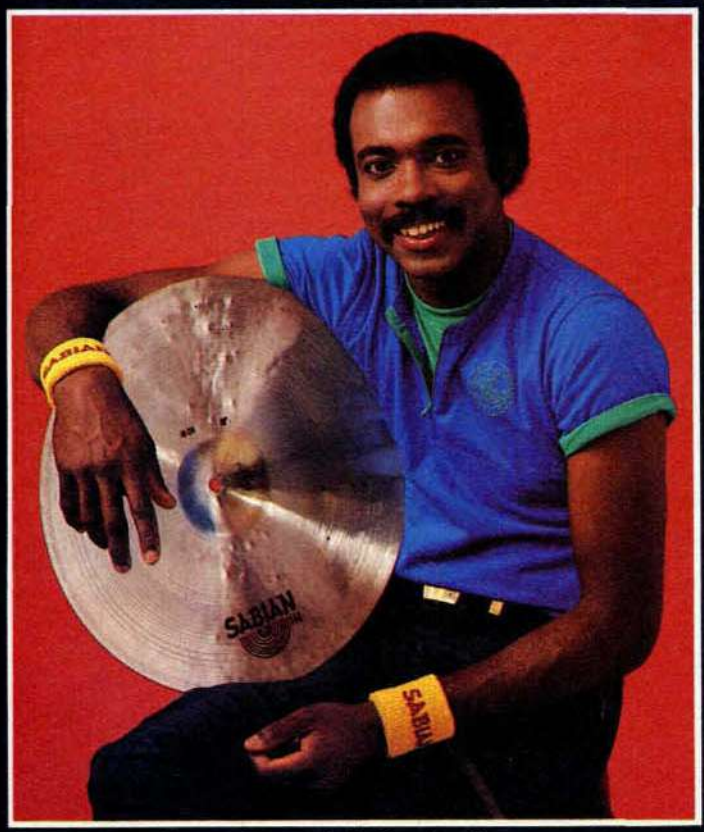

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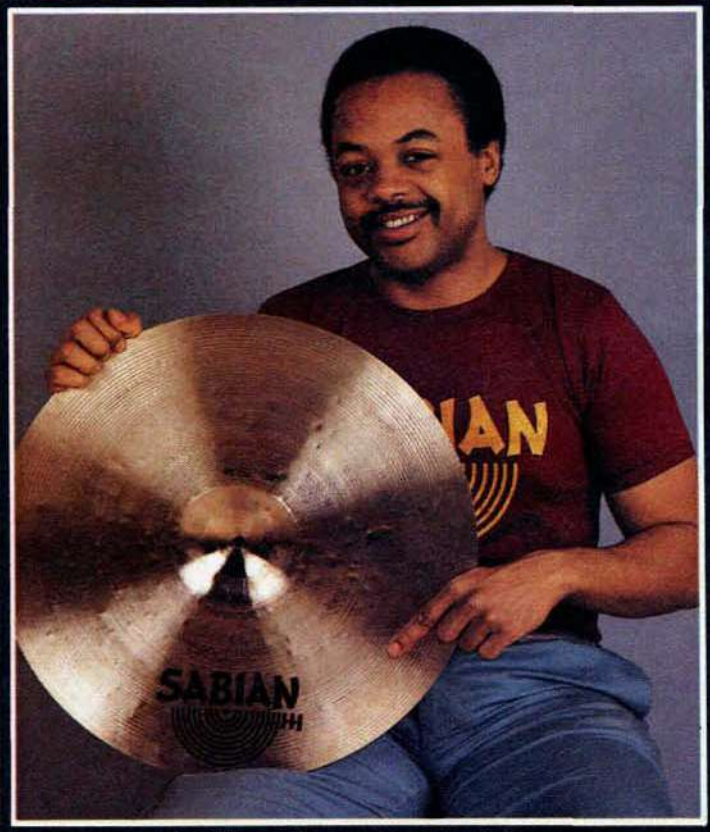

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"There's Willie Wilcox. He's that so-and-so jazz drummer."

RF: But then you would be labeled as one thing.

WW: The thing about me is that the drums alone don't fascinate me. When I first started, they did. I spent eight years of my life not seeing people. I didn't have girlfriends. I didn't go to parties. I didn't do anything but play drums and think about drums intensely. That was my life.

RF: Sometimes when you're only immersed in your instrument, it makes you self-centered, and then playing with other people is difficult.

WW: I grew up in Glens Falls, New York, which is not a big town. It's far away from everything and there was nobody to play with. I would go on weddings and play like Tony Williams—or *try* to play like Tony Williams. 1 was selfish in that whenever I played I wanted to play the kind of music 1 liked to play. The only chance I had to play was when I went out on a wedding, and I wanted to play my stuff. Well, I'd play my stuff while they were playing "Satin Doll" or something. The people couldn't dance and the players couldn't play. There was just no place for me to play, so I would play with records. When the big bands like Woody Herman, Count Basie and Duke Ellington would come to town, I would go to see them. Freddie Blood, the guy I studied with originally, was friends with all these people. When the bands would take their breaks, I'd go behind the bar with the big stereo and play drums with jazz albums. I was 16 years old, and I was playing all the Freddie Hubbard and Miles stuff. I was just into jazz—period. I would transcribe all the solos. I knew all of them. During the breaks, I would play and the musicians would come up and say, "Yeah, man, you sound great." Yeah, I sounded great, but I sounded great playing to a record. I wanted to be *with* those bands.

RF: You had mentioned to me that college was a growing experience on a personal level even more than on a musical level, having come from a small town.

WW: In high school, I was a hell raiser and school was a very difficult period for me. I didn't want to be in school at all from the time I was in kindergarten. But I had studied drums intensely. I had done all the reading, played all my jazz albums, and transcribed all this stuff. By the time I got to Berklee in 1969, my teacher, Gene Roma, finally said, "What are we going to do, really, that you haven't done?" It wasn't that I was incredible, but I had basically gone through what Berklee was able to give me the first year. So Gene said he had a gig he couldn't always do and asked if I would sub for him. Plus, at school, studying piano was great. There were also some workshops, and that was my first experience playing with other players. I had never known what it was like to play with somebody who was imitating the kinds of things I was imitating. Nobody in Glens Falls really had the desire or the need to do the things I wanted to do. I wanted to be a professional player, but for everyone else it was a hobby. When I got to Berklee, I found other kids who had the same feelings I had. It was my first sharing experience.

RF: What about, on the other side of it, that first discovery of the word "competition"?

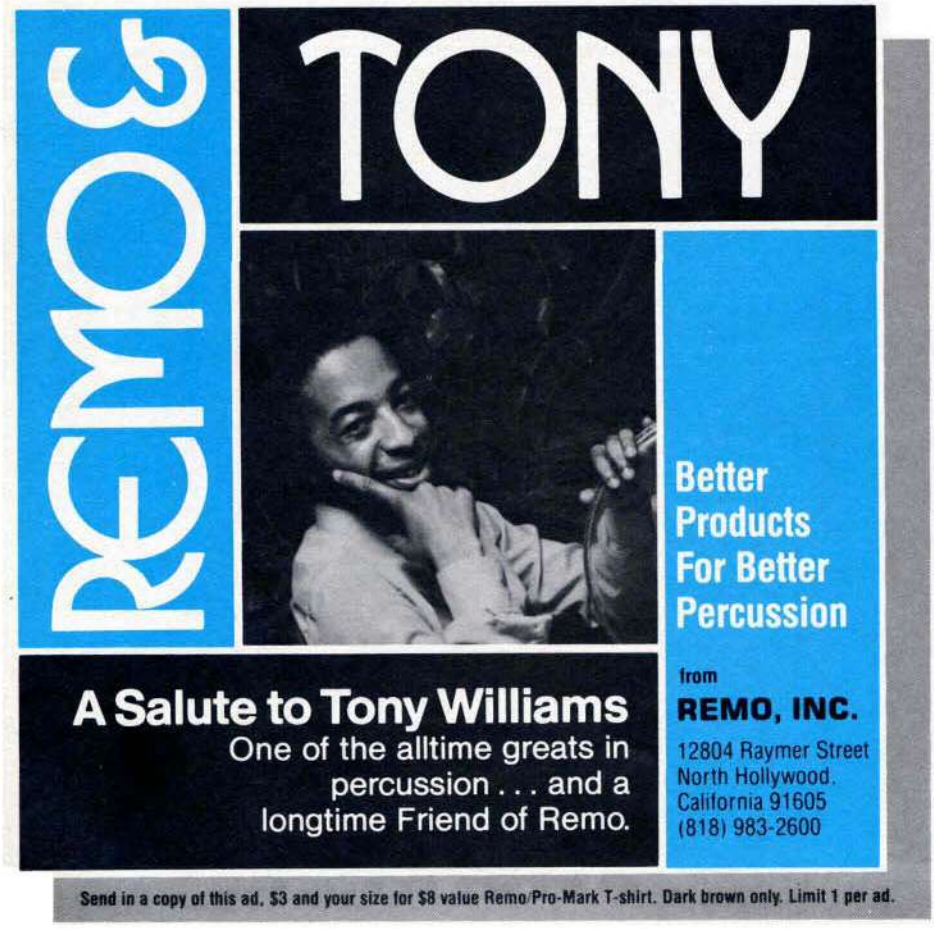
WW: I've always been competitive inasmuch as I have a high standard for myself. You have to in this business. You have to be into what you're doing, and nothing comes without work. At that time, I really wanted to be the best drummer in the world. I went to Berklee when the school first really started to happen. It was the time of the Viet Nam war. They closed off the streets where we lived at the dorm and it was just a really incredible period of time. Kids were nuts *en mass.* There were rallies and demonstrations. The Beatles had exploded, and everybody wanted to be a guitar player or a drummer. With all these drummers, my own interest was sustained and it was very exciting. The things that inspired me about other people I adopted for myself, or they made me think about it. That's one of the things about a school environment that's good. The competition was a healthy thing. And then there was the adjustment of leaving home for the first time, being a kid on my own, and that was traumatic in its own way. But my love of music overcame the things that seemed traumatic in my life.

RF: Are the technical aspects as important as they are made out to be sometimes?

WW: Well, they're all just tools. Playing fast only becomes a tool within an idiom, so if I'm playing in the Mahavishnu Orchestra, obviously playing fast is going to be part of the music. If fast playing is used because it's an emotional peak, or solowise, playing fast is an expression of your emotion at that point, you have to have the facility to express the emotion. I guess that's the emotional challenge, as well as the never-ending crusade and quest for mastering the instrument and the art. You're trying to convey what you're feeling as a person, musically, and you're always striving to be technically proficient to do that. This may mean being able to play fast at a certain point. It may mean having the necessary restraint. It may mean being able to do abstract things that you hear but that don't flow naturally with the limbs—the stuff you hear in your head that you can't play, because there are a lot of boundaries and things that make it difficult.

RF: If you hated school since kindergarten, whatever prompted you to go to Berklee, instead of just going out and getting a gig?

WW: My parents really stressed that it was important. Also, all the high school teach-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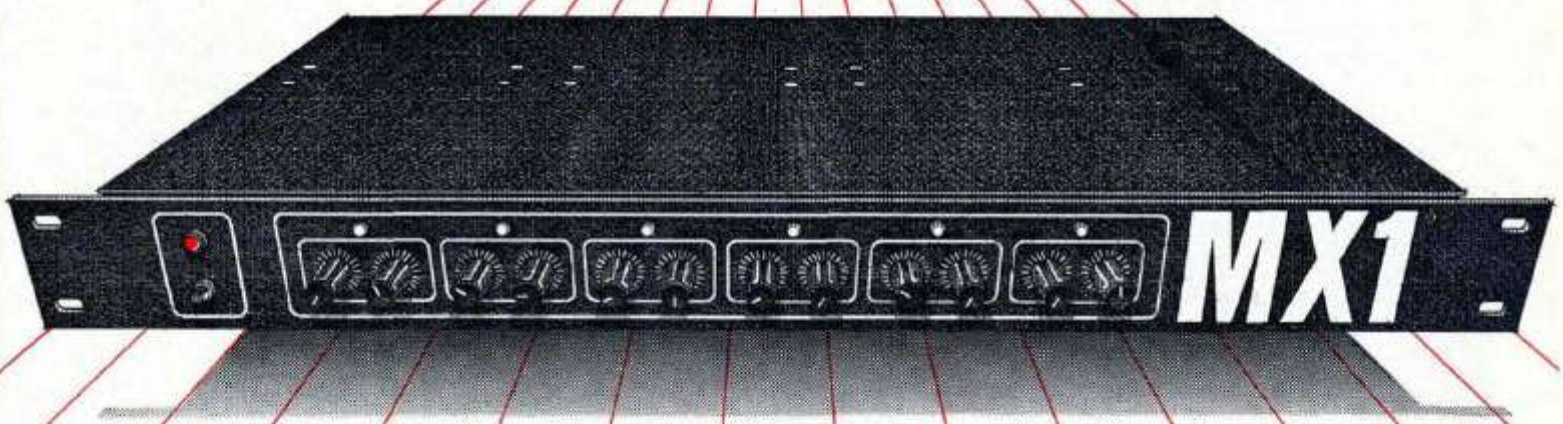

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ers said, "Well, it's okay to want to be a performer, but you need something to fall back on." When you're a kid and your peers are saying, "Listen, not many have made it. It's a long, rough road, and the chances of making it are so slim that you'd better have something to fall back on," you listen. So I thought I'd go to music school where I could play and study this other stuff—the academic part of it which I didn't like—so I could teach. But oddly enough, I did great. Then I went to the Manhattan School of Music right after that.

RF: Why did you leave Berklee?

WW: It just didn't seem right for me. Boston didn't seem happening at that period of time and I wanted to do more. I had studied so much before I went to Berklee that I was prepared at that point to start working. I really didn't know that at the time, though. A lot of people who did a lot of playing needed to go back and study, but I had studied and really needed to play.

RF: In retrospect, was going to school the right thing for you to do? Did you learn? Was it valuable?

WW: Yeah, I learned. It's all an experience. The things that were really valuable weren't the drum-related things, but the piano and such. Again, I am a music-oriented person and I play other instruments. Whatever situation I'm in as a drummer, I'm a musician and I contribute to the music. The more I know about the music, the more I can give. I don't feel that I've given enough just by playing the drums. I don't have the drums mastered by any means, but it's not enough for me as an individual just to do that. I need to contribute musically too. I like that total feeling of creating. The ear training and piano playing were great at school. Mostly, what I got out of it was just listening to other drummers say, "Hey, did you hear this record by so and so?"

RF: You had been much more into the player aspect before, and in school, you really got into the ensemble effort. What changed?

WW: What changed was being in pop music. That was the big difference.

RF: Why did you go from jazz to pop?

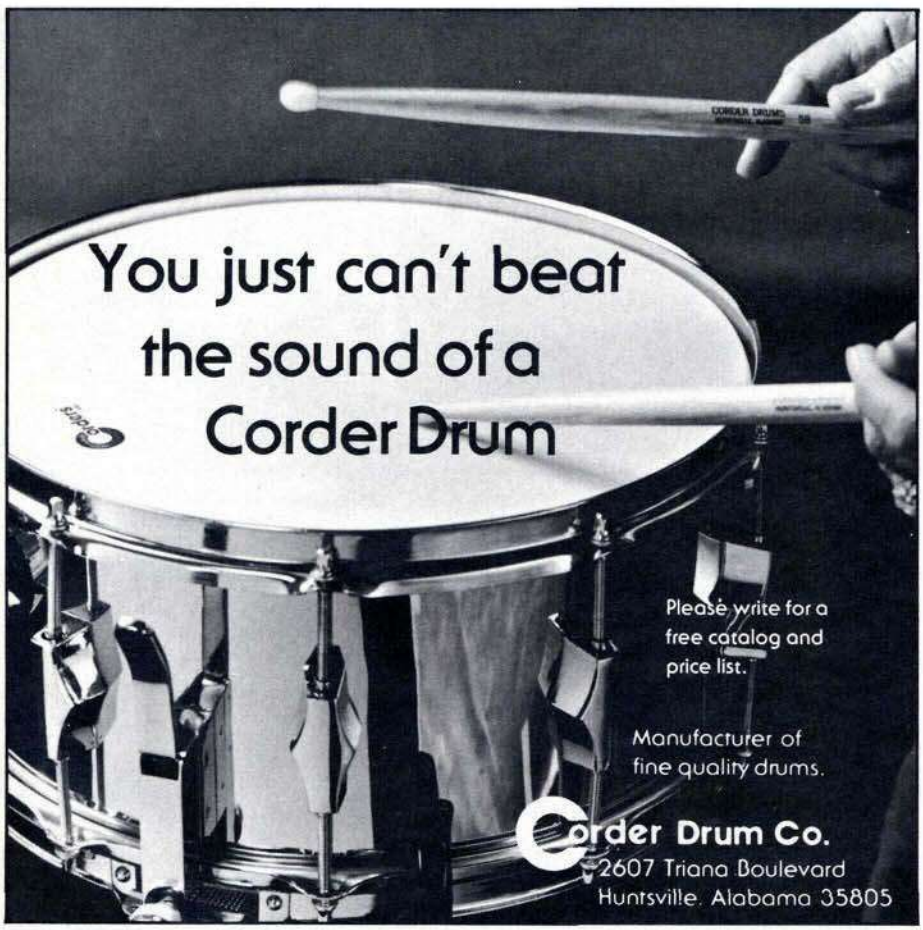
WW: There were two reasons I did it: a financial reason and a social reason. When I was younger—19 or 20 years old—I found it distasteful to be playing in clubs in the Bronx. It just didn't seem to be healthy in terms of a young person growing up and having a balanced kind of life. Maybe an artist isn't supposed to have a balanced life, but you don't have to drive yourself down that road deliberately in order to be great. It isn't going to ensure any kind of greatness or success. I didn't like being 20 and hanging out with people who were 40 just because it meant being able to play jazz. I wanted to experience people my age. I was into listening to George Benson and Chick Corea before that was hip. Then when Chick and those artists started doing their fusion stuff, all the young people started saying, "Wow, check out George Benson and Chick Corea." I had done that already when they were first doing the stuff in the purest form. Then they started changing for financial reasons, because very, very sadly, in this country, jazz music is not supported. We've heard it a million times and it's true. It's the most disgusting neglect of the American people not to support these players who are tremendous artists and who have dedicated their lives to this! When I heard that Jack DeJohnette was doing a project with Andy Summers, I thought it was just fantastic because it will give people a chance to recognize somebody who is a true artist. The reason I didn't go into the jazz direction was the social reason and then I started playing with local rock groups. Well, I had much more facility than was necessary at that time to play rock. Also all my time was on the top and I had to learn about this whole other thing.

RF: Do you feel that the jazz background you have has been valuable in playing rock?

WW: I think so. I found that I really had to edit a lot of my playing. When I first started playing rock, it was just physically different. It was harder hitting the drums and a physically more demanding situation. 1 had to learn how to relax within that context. Now that I've been doing it longer, it's fine. On this new album I'm concentrating on playing rock 'n' roll kinds of things, but with something more to it because it gets very boring. That's where the restraint comes in. If you're playing with a heavy metal band, the simplistic playing is part of that music and it creates part of what that music is. If you start diverting from that, you'll destroy it. I'm experimenting with other ways I can look at those kinds of beats and play those things the way a jazz player would conceive of them, twisting these things around a little. Having a jazz background and a musical background is definitely helpful. I'm not at all sorry that I studied.

RF: You mentioned before that rock 'n' roll is a physically exhausting experience. How do you pace yourself during a show, and what do you do outside of the gig that helps you keep in shape and helps your approach to your instrument on stage?

WW: I've been through a lot of different periods with that. I've always been a physically active person, but I think it depends on the person. Everybody's body is different, so what is right for one is not going to work for the other person. When I was boxing, I felt great because I was in good condition and eating right. On the gigs, I would keep regular hours, eat good foods and take care of myself. I don't think boxing enhanced my playing, but boxing was great because my stamina was developed to a high level. I was at the point



where I was shadow boxing, jumping rope, working out on the road and then playing the shows at night. It got to the point where it was a little too much because the show was so physically demanding and so was working out. I find it works best if I really lighten up the routine while I'm on the road, and just eat and sleep well. When I'm off, I can be a little more intense about working out. But it's hard to find time to do all that stuff, if you want to keep in shape, write tunes, do sessions, be in a band and work on solo projects. It's hard to squeeze it all in, but I guess that's the challenge.

RF: How did the writing enter into it?

WW: I always wanted to play a lot of instruments and Todd Rundgren was one of the first people to do that kind of thing. I had a few of his early albums and that kind of inspired me to put the piano and bass parts down myself. It started as a hobby kind of thing where I dabbled with it, but I never entertained the idea of being a serious writer. In playing jazz, the changes are so sophisticated that you really have to study to start creating in that idiom. The rock thing was easier to get at. One of the greatest things about getting into Utopia was that it gave me the opportunity to start writing. Then I started playing bass in shows and singing. I had sung background in a few bands, but the first real singing I had done live was in front of thousands of people. It was one of those situations, again, where I had never done it, but jumped right in. It was a scary feeling, but I love being in situations where it's on the edge.

A good thing about doing a session is that you're on the edge. When we did the Meat Loaf tunes, "Two Out Of Three Ain't Bad" and the flip side, "For Crying Out Loud," we did it live with a 32-piece orchestra. I went into the session with three drumsticks, none of which matched. On the first take, I broke one of the sticks, so I had two left. The tip broke off one of the others, so I played it butt end, and that's how I did the session. It was nuts, but it was great.

Playing with Daryl and John was really the beginning of the whole pop thing for me. I auditioned for them and got the call on my birthday nearly nine years ago. I was with them for a couple of years. I love those guys; I think they're great. It's too bad I couldn't have been with them at a later period, because I was with them during the period where they were going through a lot of changes musically. It was really the beginning of their career. They were very inspirational for my writing, though.

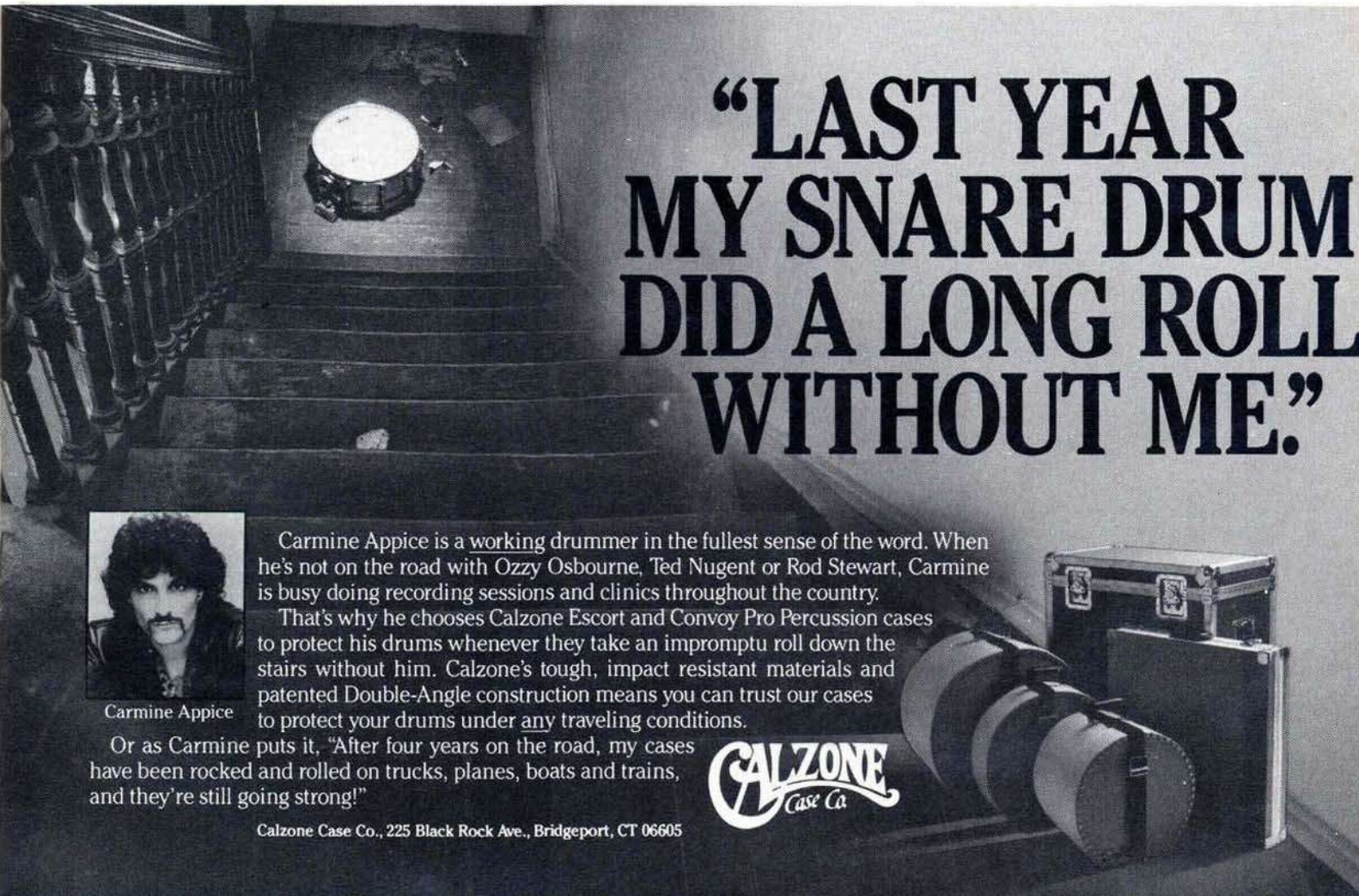
RF: What is the situation with Colgems?

WW: That deal came about when I really wanted to do something different. I met David Lasley when he sang background for Utopia on one of the tours. Then I called him on the West Coast and told him there wasn't much going on. He said he was doing some demos, and I said I'd come out to play on them. I had just begun to dabble with writing. I was sitting at the piano and working on this song, when David asked what I was playing. That was "Got To Find Love," which he recorded with the Pointer Sisters. We work incredibly well together and wrote five songs in five days. "Never Say," on his album *Missin' Twenty Grand,* was written in one night when the record company needed another tune for the album. David took me over to meet Chuck Kaye, who was the head of Geffen Publishing, and they signed me. Then Chuck went to Warner Brothers, so I was a Warner Brothers writer for a year. My contract ended with Warners and I sought out another company right when the record crunch was happening. Finally I met Paul Tannen, who was at Colgems, and he liked my stuff and signed me there.

RF: You've been coproducer on projects, and even the Utopia situation where there are four producers. What is that like?

WW: It's not easy. The members of Utopia have been together so long that everybody knows what the others like and dislike. On Utopia records, we all give input and Todd usually mixes the records. On the Rubinoos record, Todd was the executive producer, but he really wasn't around during most of the recording.

RF: Do you find it difficult playing and producing at the same time?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WW: It gets a little difficult because I would love to be in a situation where I would hire a drummer who would come in and play. I love most of the drummers I hear. After being with yourself all the time and hearing your own things, it's so refreshing to hear other players play and to talk to people. I hope to be in a position soon where I can produce and bring somebody else in to play. I think that would be good because I wouldn't make a drummer play what I wanted. If that were the case, I would play the part. But I would hire somebody to do something that I wouldn't do, or who I thought would do that job really well.

RF: What does your current setup consist of?

WW: I play Sonor drums—the *Signature* series. The floor tom-tom is 16 x 18 and the other toms are 12 x 12, 13 x 13 and 14 x 14. The bass drum is 16 x 20, and the snare I use is a circa 1926 all-brass Ludwig *Super Sensitive.* I have a couple of snare drums: a 6'/2" Leedy/Ludwig wooden snare drum, and a 1962 5 1/2" *Ludwig Super Sensitive* chrome snare drum. I also use the polished brass *Super Sensitive* that Charlie Donnelly did.

RF: What about heads?

WW: I use *Pinstripe* heads on the top and the clear *Ambassadors* on the bottom. The clear heads resonate more on the bottom, while the *Pinstripes* on the top deaden it a little bit. It all depends on what the situation is, though. For what we usually do, I like the *Pinstripe* because it's dead, yet has that kind of edgy, rock 'n' roll sound and can sound big. I like the white coated heads too, but I haven't used those in a long time. On the David Lasley album, there is a ballad where I'm playing brushes. In those cases, I like to play on a regular rough coat white head because the coating provides more resistance and increases the surface friction that the brush rubs against. You have a lot more brush sound on something like that than you would on a smooth plastic head.

RF: What about cymbals?

WW: I endorse Zildjian. The sizes vary, but I have 13" and 14" hi-hats. I use my 13" a lot and really like them because they're quick. I use the 14" for a little heavier music where I'm not required to be as sensitive. I use a K. Zildjian 16" crash, a 19" or 20" *China Boy,* an A. Zildjian ride cymbal, which I think is 20", and an 18" A. Zildjian crash cymbal. I use the Sonor heavy-duty stands, which I think are really great. The bass drum pedal I use is the Ludwig *Speed King.*

RF: Your motorcycle setup was quite elaborate.

WW: God knows how many of us have seen drum solos live and we all know there are lots of great players out there, but as great as they may be, a solo can be grating. A great solo is a great solo, don't misunderstand me, but I thought, "I just don't want to go out and play a drum solo. What can I do to make it a little more interesting?" So the band came up with a concept for some kind of a vehicle. We went to a motorcycle shop and started to experiment with that concept. I sat in a chair and thought, "Can I play with my legs up higher?" The laws of gravity say it's physically impossible to play with your legs up in the air, so we figured the best thing to do would be to keep my feet down and change what I was sitting on. We came up with the motorcycle frame, took a chain pedal, inverted it and hooked an aircraft wire onto the bottom of the chain. It was kept in tension. When I pressed on the pedal, I would pull down on this wire, which was attached to this chain that was about two-and-a-half feet away from me up in front. There was a Remo practice pad up in the front, and a Paia synthesizer with a sensor in it and a regular beater. When the beater hit the Remo head, it triggered the sensor, which was connected to the synthesizer and sounded like a bass drum. That was the thing that was very strange. The bass drum beater was kind of all by itself. We used *Syncussion* synthesized drums and duplicated drum sounds as closely as we could with that kind of equipment. We did this really quickly. If we had had more time, we could have done a better job. The cymbal stands were exhaust pipes and all the drums were mounted very close in a circle. The one good thing about it was that, on a regular kit, the physical necessity of moving around the kit obviously slows you down. With this situation, all the drums were about 6" or 8" in diameter, and they were all located in one central area. I only had to move my hand an inch or so to cover the entire set. It was also motorized and, when I did my drum solo, it spun around and it had lights on the front like two headlights. It was pretty wild.

RF: Is there anything else you would like people to know about you?

WW: I want people to know that it wasn't easy and I did go home crying from gigs sometimes. The other thing that is important for them to know is that starting in the business is really hard, because you just love playing and then it becomes a business. It becomes very difficult when you're really making a living doing it and you really have to strive at keeping it alive. You have to struggle to keep the passion within the players you work with, and you have to struggle to keep it alive within yourself. You just keep trying to do that. I'll have periods where I just don't want to play, or I lose interest in different aspects of it or lose interest all together. I think that's natural. The excitement is in overcoming it. Whenever you overcome any situation, then it makes that bad situation turn into another block in the foundation. It just becomes another notch on the gun. It's important for people to know that it's a long road to wherever they're going.

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Tony Williams: "Snake Oil"

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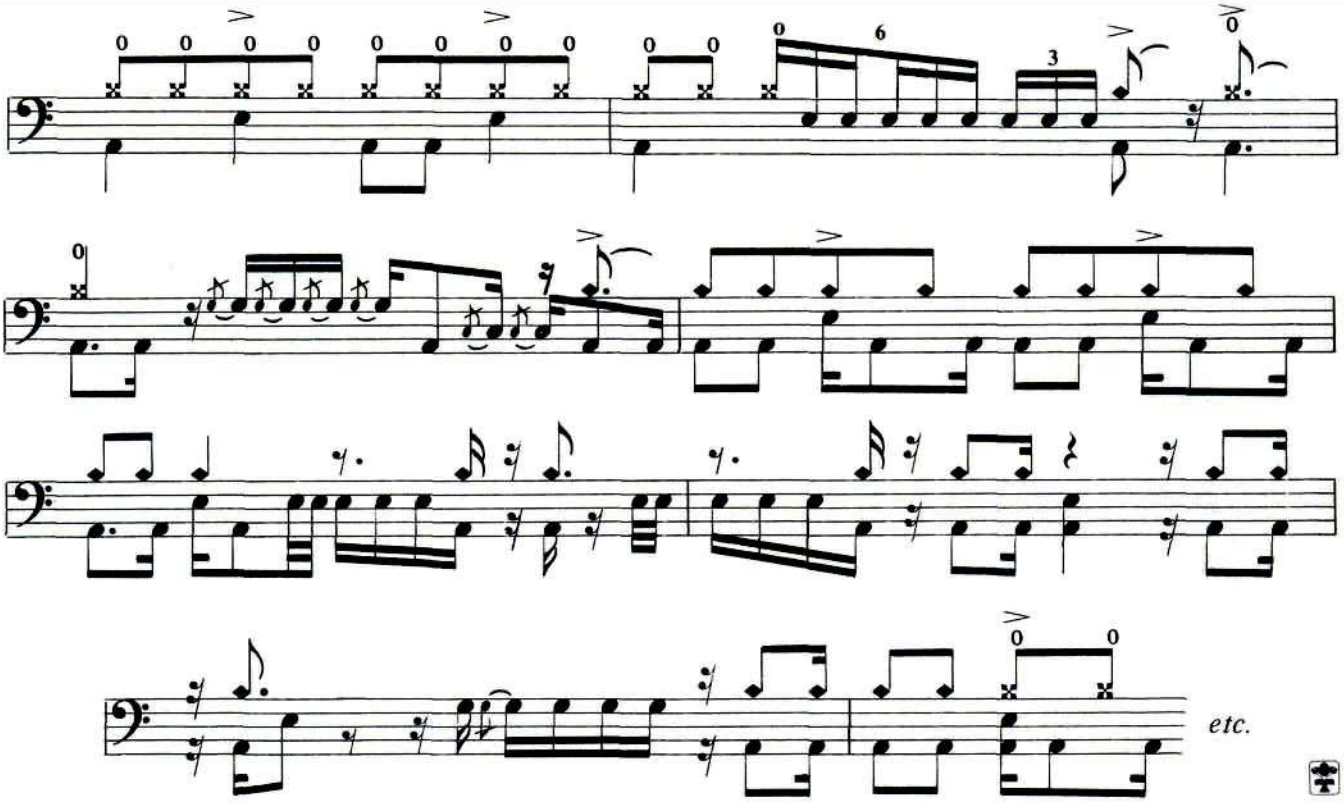
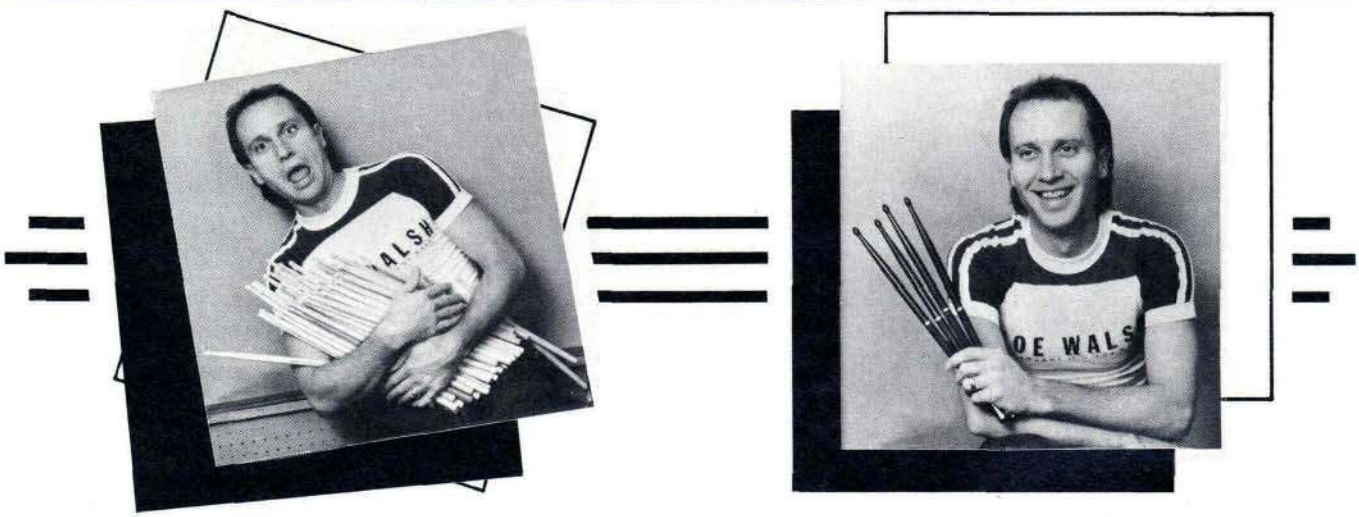

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by Chip Stern

Sabian Cymbals

Sabian is a relatively new name on the cymbal market, but the company's products have gained a great deal of attention and popularity in a very short time. With that in mind, we asked Chip Stern to examine a representative selection of Sabian cymbals and report on his reactions.

Chip tested cymbals from Sabian's HH *series, which are hand-hammered in the classic tradition and are similar in nature to Zildjian K.s. He also tested cymbals from their* AA *series, which are made from the same alloy but machine-hammered. The* AA *series offers a wider variety of models, weights, and sizes. As a line, Sabian cymbals tend to be individualistic in nature—similar again to Zildjians—as opposed to the computerized consistency of Paiste cymbals.*

While it isn't possible to give a cymbal the type of description normally found in this column (type of materials used, means of construction, etc.), Chip has managed to convey a fairly comprehensive visual and aural picture of each cymbal in the group he tested.

1. *14" AA Regular Hi-Hats.* These are tight, bright hi-hats of medium to medium-heavy weight, with a fast, clean response. These cymbals can be used for controlled applications where a crisp stick sound is desired.

2. *14" AA Flat Hats.* The bottom cymbal has a flat, bell-less taper, with three holes drilled around the center to prevent air-lock. The closed foot sound is slightly faster and cleaner than *Regulars,* but the top cymbal has a much more airy sound for opening and closing effects with sticks.

3. *14" HH Hi-Hats (brilliant finish).* These hi-hats have a much more detailed opening and closing sound than *AA* hi-hats, though there is not quite as much stick or foot sound (unless you opt for a heavier pair). These cymbals would be a good choice for drummers who, like Stewart Copeland, prefer a very fast response from the hi-hats, rather than a hard stick sound. The sound is remarkably warm, with a large variety of overtones—a classic jazz sound. The brilliant finish darkens the amber of the *HH* metal, making it look more like "the old K.s."

4. *16" AA Extra Thin Crash.* Drummers in high-volume situations assume that they could never use paper-thin crashes, due to breakage. But with some discretion, this could be a more effective crash than much larger, heavier cymbals. The sound is very fast—a quick, rich swell that cuts through, then dies away almost immediately. You don't have to hit them hard at all, and by getting a few of these in odd sizes, like 15", 16" and 17", you'll have a battery of lively 8th- and 16th-note accent cymbals.

5. *16" HH Thin Crash.* Whereas the previous cymbal was fast, this one is slow. With its small bell and flatter profile, a light glancing blow won't make much of a sound, but if you really crack it, you'll get a dark, nasty crash, a remarkably low pitch that won't get in the way of guitars, and a very short decay, so you can hit something else. It is very full sounding and distinctive.

6. *17" AA Medium-Thin Crash.* Due to the proportions of bell to bow (more surface area and a smaller cup), odd-size cymbals are really special and can give you a different range of pitches to play with. Normally a medium-thin would begin to swell as you did a ride on it, but this one had a nice, tight feel when played with a medium-weight stick, and a shimmering, robust crash with a quick decay.

7. *16" HH China.* A fat, funky cymbal, with a tight, pangy cast to the sound. The crash sound is so short and full that you can do 8th-note ride patterns on it, yet when the cymbal is given a hard crack, the sound shouts. Larger models, like the 20", are more appropriate for a light, fast ride.

8. *18" AA Flat China.* This has a smoother, more gong-like character than the *HH,* with longer sustain and a very mellow undertone. The flat taper of the edge and the small bell make it tighter and more musical than most swish and pang designs. The smaller size permits you to use it for a fast, full crash with enough high end so that it won't interfere with lower electric guitar frequencies.

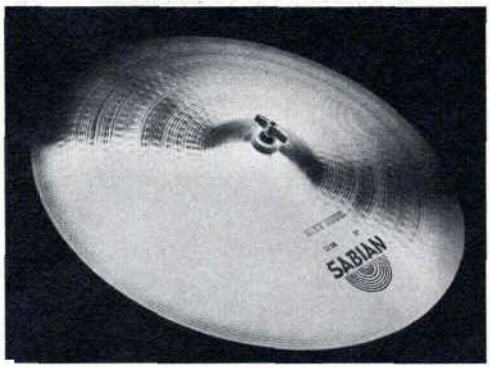
9. *19" AA Thin Ride.* This is a useful crash-ride cymbal for almost any application. Once again, the proportions of bell to cymbal are altered with this diameter, resulting in a cymbal with a bright, pinpoint ride sound that never gets metallic or clangy. By leaning into it with the side of your stick, you can get an explosive, crackling kind of crash accent. To my ears, this is a Buddy Rich-type lightning ride sound. A 20" diameter offers a slightly mellower, more contained overall response.

10. *20" AA Rock Ride.* With its higher profile, medium-heavy to heavy weight and large cup, this ride produces a strong, warm stick sound that is brilliant and cutting, though not as "tingy" as a ping design. The bell sound is clear and solid, and the undertone is fairly deep compared to the bright overtones, so you get a very sonorous attack.

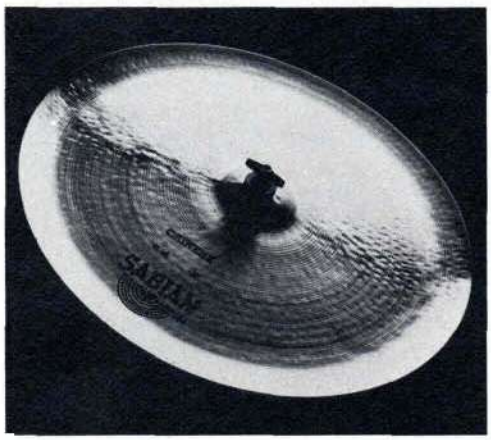
11. *21" AA Dry Ride.* This model is an odd-sized specialty ride that could be the answer for big band and rock players with a fairly even right-hand attack (people who play beats rather than accents and colors). What you have here is the bell from a 20" on a 21" cymbal, with a slightly lower profile than a regular *AA,* but not as flat as that of a *Mini-Bell Ride.* Whereas the mini-bell design yields a very flat, tight ride sound at any volume, the 21" *Dry Ride* has a warmer, slightly lower pitch, a darker stick sound, and just a slight bit of swell to the sound when you lay into it (but never so much that it swamps the ride). So the sound is tight and dry, with just a little more warmth than a *Mini-Bell,* but not nearly so much as a *Medium.*

12. *20" AA Medium Ride (brilliant finish).* This type is a perfect all-around cymbal, with a smooth, crystalline brilliance to the attack, a full, mellow undertone, and crash sounds that range from soaring and explosive to tight and full bodied, depending on cymbal-to-cymbal differences in weight. For ride work, the sound is balanced, even and shimmering, with a nice, controlled buildup that stays out of the way right up until you want it to get rough.

13. *20" HH Medium Ride.* Cymbal-to-cymbal differences in sound make generalizations difficult, but the range of ride sounds is there, including everything from the softer, pang-like swell of an old Art



A 21" Sabian AA Dry Ride.



A 20" Sabian HH Chinese cymbal. Note the more heavily "dented" appearance caused by the hand-hammering.

Blakey ride to the tighter, more medium-heavy clang of the classic Tony Williams sound. The overall feeling of the cymbal is warm, and it seems like you get a different sound everywhere you touch the surface. For short, melodic cascades of crashes, 8th-note accents and glancing half-crash colors, this is a good all-around cymbal, because its impact is very dry and controlled. Electric guitarists will appreciate the definition, along with the fact that the frequency range of the cymbal doesn't clash with their instrument. If you're only going to get one ride cymbal, this is an excellent all-around possibility.

14. *22" HH Heavy Ride.* This is probably a bit much for the average jazz drummer who prefers to lay into a cymbal as we described on the 20" *HH Medium Ride.* It is more appropriate for rock players who want a cutting stick sound without too much high end or buildup, and who want to get nasty without covering a vocalist. This cymbal's extra-low undertone is warm and clangy, supporting its dark, slicing ping sound, and the bell is small and penetrating. For a similar response but a brighter overall feel, a 20" *HH Heavy Ride* would be an excellent alternate choice.

#12 – AUGUST 1979
Billy Cobham, Elvin Jones, Jimmy Cobb.

#13 – OCTOBER 1979
Gene Krupa Tribute Issue, Michael Shrieve.

#17 – JUNE 1980
Carl Palmer, Derek Pellicci, Great Jazz Drummers– Part 1.

#18 – AUGUST 1980
Chet McCracken & Keith Knudsen, Ed Green.

#22 – APRIL 1981
Hal Blaine, Gil Moore, P.I.T. Close-Up.

#23 – MAY 1981
Jalmoe Johnson-Butch Trucks, Roger Hawkins, Buddy Harman, Paul T. Riddle.

#25 – JULY 1981
Harvey Mason, Alan Gratzer, Bassists: On Drummers.

#26 – AUGUST 1981
Billy Kreutzman, Mickey Hart, James Bradley, Jr.

#27 – OCTOBER 1981
Shelly Manne, Tommy Aldridge.

#28 – NOVEMBER 1981
Jim Keltner, Terry Bozzio, Ed Blackwell.

#29 – DECEMBER 1981
Ringo Starr, Mitch Mitchell.

#30 – FEBRUARY 1982
Philly Joe Hones, Stix Hooper.

#31 – APRIL 1982
Max Weinberg, Narada Michael Walden, Danny Gottlieb.

#32 – MAY 1982
Aynsley Dunbar, Alex Acuna.

#33 – JUNE 1982
Max Roach, Keith Moon, Vic Firth.

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by Rick Van Horn

Show Band Drumming: Something Extra

In previous columns I've focused on club drummers who play in groups that perform a variety of contemporary, popular music, primarily for a dancing audience—basically, a top-40 situation. Of course, there are also club bands that specialize a little more, and work in clubs that cater to a clientele that enjoys a specific type of music (rock clubs, R&B clubs, punk clubs, etc.). But even in those specialized clubs, the bands are expected to play songs that are currently popular within their particular style.

By focusing on these dance-oriented bands, I've left out a smaller, but still very important, segment of the club band population: the show bands. Long a mainstay of the hotel and lounge circuits across the country, show bands offer club drummers an opportunity to display their talents in a much less restrictive format than that of a top-40 group. But a show band drummer must also meet requirements that a top-40, or other dance group drummer, need not be concerned with. In short, the show band drummer needs something extra.

As usual, we need to start by defining terms. When I use the term "show band," I am not talking about a group of dance band musicians backing up different artists for weekend shows at resorts or hotels, nor am I describing a showroom orchestra, of the type found in Las Vegas or Atlantic City. I am talking about a situation where the band, as a performing unit, *is* the entertainment, putting on a show for a seated, attentive audience. And while there are several types of show bands, they all share several common aspects worthy of consideration. So let's talk a little about show bands in general.

TRAVELING

While some show bands enjoy regional popularity and can obtain bookings in the same general area for fairly long periods of time, there is a greater tendency to travel. A top-40 band can play to the same audience regularly, since updating their song list will automatically keep the group fresh. But it's much more difficult to make changes in a lengthy show, due to the complicated nature of arrangements, dialogue, etc. Thus, in an effort to keep things fresh, the thing that show bands change most often is their audience, on the theory that, if you can't bring a new show to your old audience, you can take your old show to a new audience. Consequently, most show bands spend a lot of time on the road, primarily on the hotel lounge circuits, where a certain level of sophistication can be expected from the clientele. Rooms are generally provided as part of these contracts, and a decent profit can be made if the group works steadily and is properly managed. On the other hand, show bands face the same "road hassles" as do any other group, and in some cases a few more. For example, the difficulty of equipment handling can be compounded for a show band by the addition of costumes, props, and even lighting equipment to the normal complement of instruments and sound equipment that must be lugged around.

A greater concern for the show band, however, is the potential difficulty of obtaining bookings that will provide decent routing. Show bands can sometimes be very specialized in nature and, consequently, cannot work in just any club. The majority of clubs across the country are dance-oriented and do not use show-type entertainment. The clubs that do, tend to be in major cities or in large hotels located at logical stopping points along major highways. This means that, in order for the show band to stay solidly booked, they may have to travel a greater distance between bookings than would a traveling dance band.

BOOKINGS AND MONEY

The traveling problem is mollified somewhat by the fact that show bands tend to make more money per engagement than dance bands. This is partly because they offer a more unique form of entertainment, and partly because the types of rooms that offer shows tend to be a little classier than the average dance club. I've mentioned hotel lounges, and these are the circuits such as the Holiday Inn, Ramada, Sheraton, Hilton, and other chains. Not every location uses show bands, but you get an idea of the type of engagement I'm talking about. Additionally, there are the top bookings, such as the lounges of the hotel/casinos in Las Vegas, Reno, Lake Tahoe, and Atlantic City, and the major tourist hotels in Miami, The Catskills, Waikiki, etc. These rooms use show groups exclusively and pay top dollar.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Working with a show band has several psychological advantages over working with a dance band. We've all experienced the feeling of being a human jukebox when playing in a dance band—wondering if the crowd was even aware that live musicians were playing. Since a show band presents their performance in a much more theatrical format, the audience is prepared to watch, listen, and above all, react to the show. You actually hear applause at the end of the numbers. Doing a show can be marvelous for your self-esteem. There is no feeling in the world like the satisfaction that comes from knowing—immediately—that something you've worked hard to perfect has gone over the way you hoped it would.

Another emotional advantage is the sense of artistic freedom that comes from knowing you don't have to do the latest songs on the chart in order to be successful. You can build a show around virtually anything. I'll go into more detail about the various forms of shows and show bands a little later, but let me just say that, while a dance crowd expects to hear the familiar hits of the day, a show audience will accept almost anything from a group, as long as it is entertaining. I've seen teenage audiences go crazy over a show built on Broadway hits; I've heard senior citizens cheer a Beatles medley; I've watched middle-aged matrons bouncing in their seats, listening to a '50s nostalgia revue. As long as the show is original, professionally performed, and above all, entertaining, the show band has almost infinite latitude in their choice of subject matter.

The other side of this psychological coin is the dedication and time you must contribute to the preparation and rehearsal that make up a good show. You can't just take a tape of a new song home, learn your own part, and then come to a band practice and put it all together. Working up a show routine requires that each member learn the music, of course, but then the group as a whole must work out timing, arrangements, dialogue, and possibly even choreography. A show band will spend an average of two to three times as much rehearsal time *together* as a top-40 band. This can place a strain on personalities, and means that a good show band must know how to cooperate well offstage, in addition to performing well on stage.

DRUMMER EXPOSURE

The show band particularly offers the drummer a chance to gain more personal exposure than does the standard dance band. A show can feature a drum solo more readily than can most of today's dance music. Also, a much wider variety of musical styles is possible in a show format, so if you happen to be good at big band

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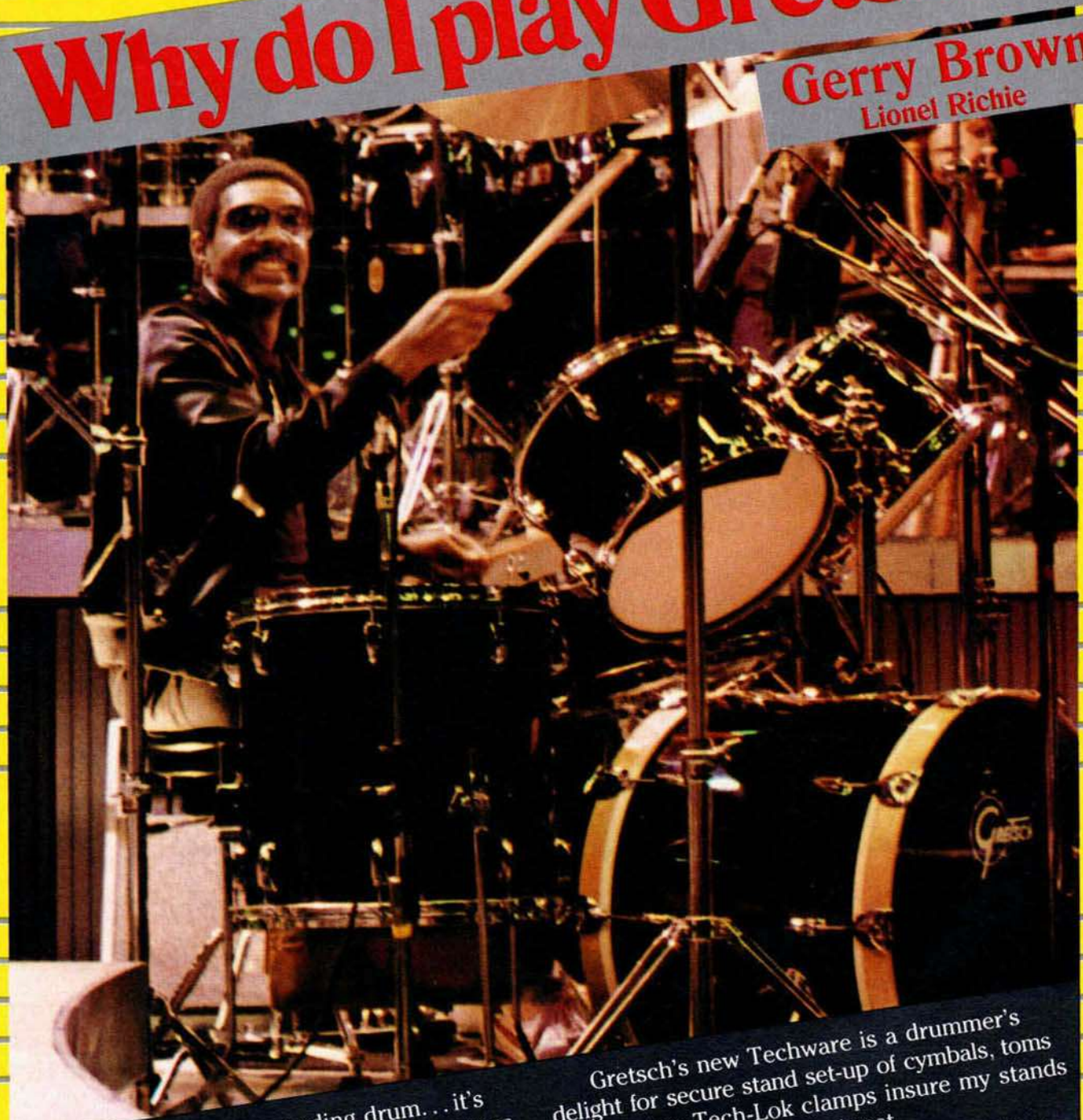

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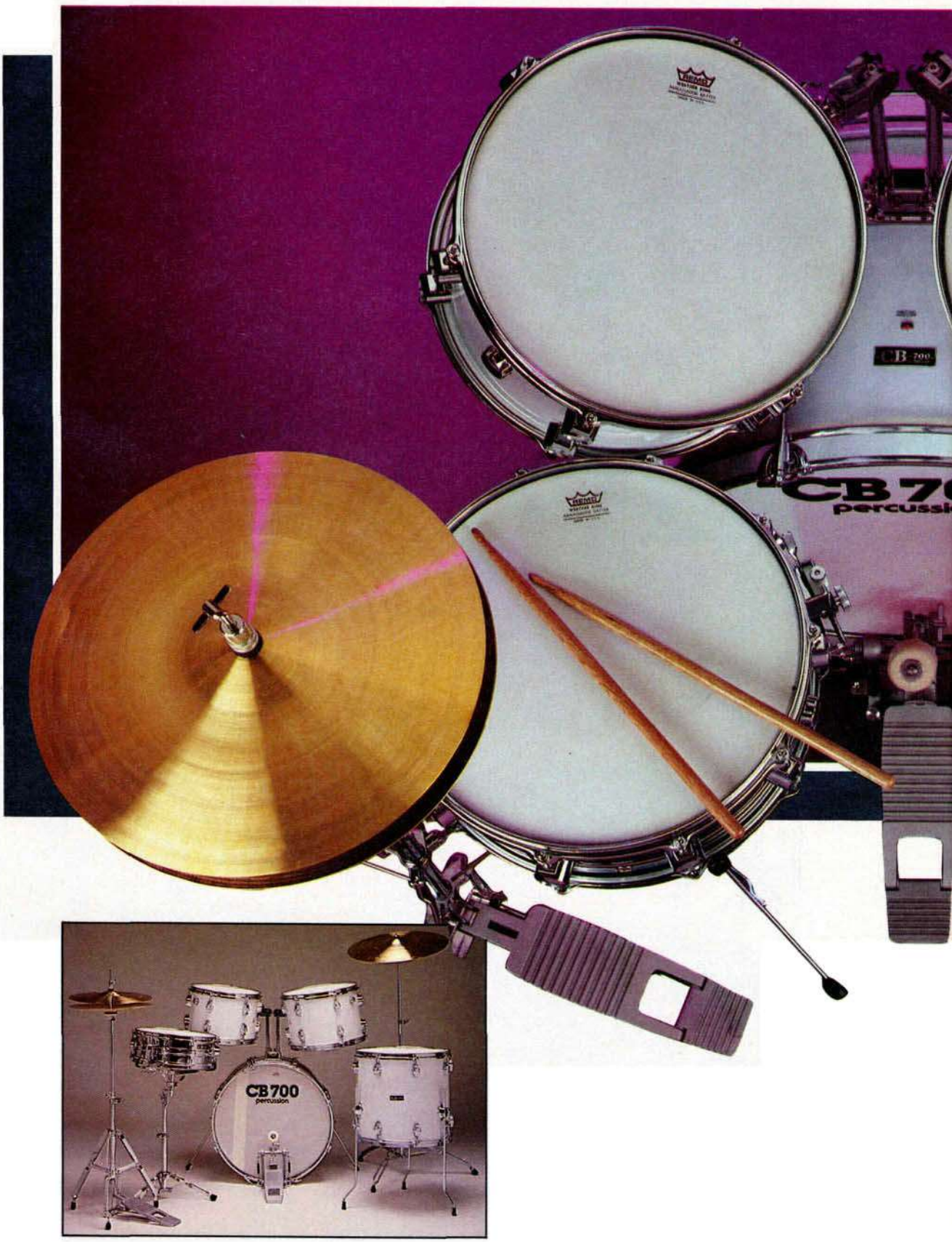

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swing or funky fusion, you're much more likely to be able to display your talent in a show than in a dance format.

But the best thing a show band can offer a drummer is the opportunity to shine, *off* of the drums. Show bands place a great value on musical versatility. If you have the ability to play other instruments, sing lead vocals, dance, tell jokes well, or do any other form of performing, a show band will give you the opportunity to employ your talent. Many groups have been put together from players who could literally play "musical chairs" all through the show, switching from instrument to instrument. The secret to this is that you don't have to be a virtuoso on every instrument, as long as you're capable of playing competently on one or two songs. For example, I've done numbers in previous bands where I accompanied myself on the piano while the rest of the group left the stage entirely. I am by no means a skilled piano player, but I can play simple chords, while carrying the melody with my singing. It gave me a chance to be in the spotlight for a couple of numbers, in a completely different role from the one the audience was used to seeing me in.

WORKING WITH COSTUMES

One other element of performing in a show band is costuming. No matter what type of show you may be doing, the likelihood is that you'll be wearing some sort of uniform or costume. That may vary from attractively uniform street apparel, to day-glo-orange sequined jumpsuits, to flashy tuxedos. You may find this a discomfort if the costuming is bulky or restrictive in nature. Sometimes tailoring can overcome such problems, and certainly you should take whatever steps are necessary to make the costume work for you. But you must understand how important *image* is to the show band, and also to the employers of show bands. Most booking agencies and management companies who advertise for show bands stipulate: "must be uniformed." It goes with the territory. The unmatched, contemporary-casual look is fine for a top-40 group. Also, heavy metal, new wave and punk each have their own distinctive wardrobe styles. But the image of the show band (unless specifically designed to represent a particular style) can generally be summed up as "flashy and classy." That's what sets a show band apart from the audience for which they're performing. I personally enjoy "dressing up" to perform, since it makes me feel like my performance is something special. This, in turn, helps me to feel like I'm something special, and it's good for each of us to feel special once in a while.

CATEGORIES

There are a variety of groups that fall under the "show band" heading. Generally speaking, they can be categorized into three basic types: The Dance & Show Band, the Variety Show Band, and the Theme Show Band. Although they have all the points I've made so far in common, they each have particular aspects that you should be aware of if you are considering working with a show band of any kind.

1. *The Dance & Show Band.* This may be the most common form of show band on the circuit today. Basically, this is a top-40 dance band that has joined forces with an individual artist, or perhaps a duo, who will front one or two show sets per night. For the balance of the evening, the band will play its standard dance repertoire. The performance demands on the musicians are not quite as heavy here as in other types of show bands, since most of the responsibility for the show portion of the evening will rest with the front artist. But even so, that artist may have a wide, variety-type repertoire, and it will be incumbent upon the musicians to be competent in all of the artist's styles. The drummer may also be called upon to punch comedy lines, or provide other support when the artist is talking with the audience. Very often, even though the front artist is the focal point of the show set, the band is worked into the show in a generally supporting role, sometimes including dialogue, comedy gags, and in other ways that are more than the top-40 genre would normally call for. Without question, the arrangements and presentation of the show music will be

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much more dramatic, more dynamic, and generally "showier" than the dance sets.

Purely from a marketing standpoint, a group like this can be very successful, because they can fill a dual role for the club that hires them. Often, the management of a club is not sure that their clientele will sit still (literally) for an evening totally made up of show entertainment. Even with two shows a night, most show bands would not fill the same time space as five sets of dance music. But if a group is prepared to do three abbreviated dance sets *and* two show sets each night, then the management has a full evening of entertainment, and can promote the fact that they are offering their customers something special by presenting the show.

If you have no previous theatrical or show experience, but have a fairly strong background in multiple playing styles, this type of show band might be just the way for you to break into the field.

2. *The Variety Show Band.* This is the type of group that bases its entire act on a variety of different material, mixing up styles, and relying heavily on intricate arrangements and a lot of medleys. Generally, the material will be contemporary in nature, but will often draw on Broadway, a particular composer, or a particular historical period or style as the basis for different musical routines. The Variety Show Band stresses the individual talents of its members (rather than a single "lead" performer), once again focusing on instrumental versatility, multiple lead vocalists, and quite often choreography. In Hawaii, I saw a group called the Society of Seven—one of the finest show bands I've ever seen. During the course of the evening, four different members of the group played drums. The primary drummer was also featured as a front vocalist, played electric bass, and was a lead dancer in several heavily choreographed numbers. He was also involved in the onstage patter and comedy dialogue. In a 90-minute show, the group performed current hits from the pop charts, Frank Sinatra favorites, Motown classics, several comedy sketches, and production numbers from several Broadway shows. A group like this requires their drummer (or drummers) to be well versed in any and all musical styles, as well as having a feeling for comedy timing and theatrical presentation.

3. *The Theme Show Band.* These are the specialists in the field of club show entertainment. Theme shows are structured around one unifying type of subject matter, whether it be a musical style, a historical period, or a certain character. For example, a few years ago, the success of *Grease* and Sha Na Na made the '50s revival shows the dominant theme on the national scene. After the death of Elvis Presley, Elvis imitators enjoyed a tremendous popularity, and several still tour successfully. Beatles copies are prevalent, as are a few exclusively Motown revues. For two years I was a member of the Bonnie & Clyde & The Hit Men show. We toured the country with a completely theatrical show based on a "Roaring Twenties" / gangster format. We did music from the '20s and '30s, including Cole Porter, George Gershwin and Al Jolson material, all set to very contemporary arrangements. Our act included comedy sketches, dance routines, long production-number medleys, the use of a wide variety of props, and a great deal of audience participation. In addition to playing the drums, I portrayed a character, in full gangster costume and makeup (including a wide-brim hat, rhinestone-studded vest, and .38 revolver in a shoulder holster), delivered scripted dialogue, improvised unscripted dialogue, fed cues to the lead performers, and was involved in a gunfight. A situation like that simply does not equate to a top-40 gig where, once a song is counted off, the drummer generally knows where everything is going and what is going to happen next. To be a member of a show band such as I've just described, you must be able to "think on your feet" and react to anything that might come up. The Theme Show is by far the most theatrical of all show band performances, and requires the greatest concentration from the drummer. After all, you cease to be you; you take on the appearance and character of someone within your theme. Yet you must still be totally in control of your playing, and meet all of the basic requirements expected of a drummer performing in any style: taste, good time, dynamics, etc.

In order to be successful in the highly specialized (and lucrative) field of show band performance, you will need to have mastered all the basic skills of your craft, and still have something extra to offer to your musical colleagues, and to your audience. If you have that, you're likely to find that a show band is the natural place for you to exhibit all your talents to their fullest.

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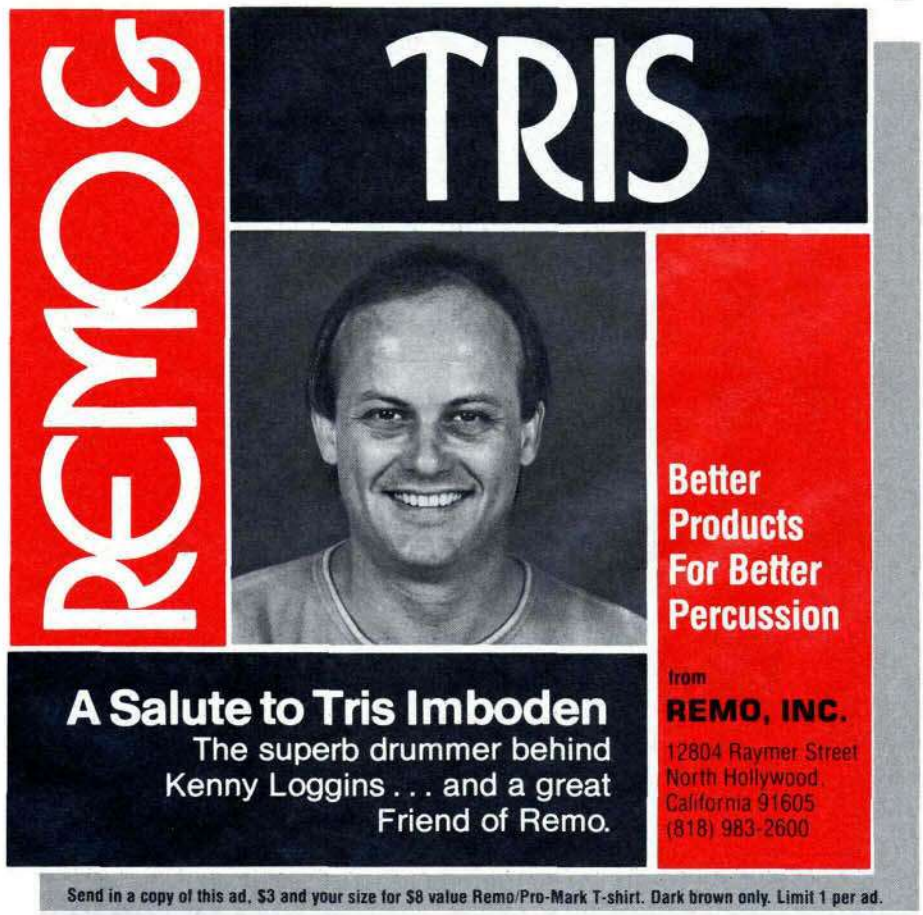
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record, the producer will send the band members home and bring in studio musicians.

TI: And put the band members' names on the album. Don't you think that, with the advent of this new music, the lack of respect for any technical perfection is almost the same sort of thing it was back then?

RF: But there's a difference. Back then, with you, it was all new; it was a whole new art. Today, there's no excuse for not being totally knowledgeable.

TI: Almost *purposely* not knowledgeable. It's almost, "In spite of existing technical expertise and prowess, I will play sloppy because it's genuine and real."

RF: Do you feel as though the kids today are not getting together for the love of it?

TI: Yeah, it's almost out of spite.

RF: When you were young, you really didn't know the money-making potential.

TI: No, that certainly wasn't why I got into it. I'm glad that money wasn't a motivation because I still feel—although this may sound like bullshit—if, all of a sudden, all my "success" were gone, I'd still be playing, and *happily* playing. I wouldn't care if it were in a Holiday Inn or wherever, because I genuinely love the drums. I always have.

RF: What happened after Honk?

TI: I moved up to L.A., and as a result of the attention Honk had gotten, and the respect musicians and producers had had for us, I got calls for studio work. That's how I started breaking in, doing demos and things. Then I did a couple Ian Matthews albums. I went to Nashville to do the first one with him, called *Go For Broke.* That was a good album; I really liked it. I did some other obscure albums, and it helped me gain more experience and more confidence in the studio. And that takes us up to right about the time that I auditioned for Loggins. Honk broke up about 1974 or '75, then I moved to L.A. and started doing the session work, and I joined Loggins in '77. So I've been with Kenny for a long time.

RF: What was the audition for Kenny like?

TI: Well, I had never really auditioned for anybody before. I'd always just been called in to do a project. But I'd heard that Kenny was holding auditions for a keyboard player, a guitar player and a drummer. I was a little bit torn about going to the audition because I was supposed to be going on the road with Ian Matthews three weeks later. I'm not the kind of person who would really want to put anybody in a fix like that, should I get the Loggins gig. At the same time, though, I was really vascillating, because I loved Kenny's music. In fact, Honk used to open for Loggins & Messina so I'd met Kenny years before, and he and Jimmy were fans of Honk as well. So I went to the audition, and I was told there were about a hundred and some-odd drummers there. I was the last person to audition. They called me back again because I guess they'd narrowed it down to a few, and then they called me back a third time. Here it was getting closer and closer to the time I was supposed to go out with Ian, but I really wanted this gig more than anything. I was so impressed with Kenny's new music. The third time it looked like I might get it. By that time I really wanted it, but I sure didn't want to tell Ian. Needless to say, I got the gig. Ian was really cool when I told him, even though he only had a week to get a new drummer.

RF: What did they have you do at the audition?

TI: They had charts, and they played the song once or twice, while I looked at it on the chart. I'm not a real strong sight reader, you see, but I can do it depending on the varying difficulty of the material. The combination of my ear and my ability to read was what got me through the thing. But I thought it was a real hip approach, because drummers who didn't read at all could still have a good shot at it by relying on their ears primarily, or vice versa.

RF: If you were auditioning drummers for Kenny Loggins, what would you look for?

TI: Well, I think more than anything I would look for a certain musicality. That's a broad term, but to me, musicality is a combination of heart, sensitivity, ears, and just that sort of intuitiveness that the right combination of players seem to share. I've found that, when playing with new people, you can tell pretty quickly

whether that's there or not. Also, of course, there would have to be a certain technical prowess on their instrument. Technique is important because Kenny's music covers such a broad range.

RF: Can you be specific? What goes into a show? What does a drummer have to come up with?

TI: Well, as far as musical genres, Kenny really leaps all over, so you need certain jazz influences, a certain command of rock 'n' roll, and some Latin knowledge. Also, like I say, it comes back to a sensitivity and the ability to be spontaneous, because with Kenny, as you've seen, it's different every night. I just love that, because it always keeps it fresh and alive.

RF: How different does it get?

TI: Kenny is a very improvisational singer, although he may not seem that way to people who hear his records. He has a true instrument in his voice. He plays with it and just throws it all over the place. I'm always following what he's doing, as well as everybody else in the band. It's not your standard pop gig with the same notes played exactly the same way every night. There's a certain open end. Of course, there are arrangements and stuff. It's not as wide open as a full jazz gig would be, but relative to a pop gig, it really is open.

RF: What else would be required of the drummer you might audition?

TI: Attitude, definitely. When a band travels together, records together, eats, sleeps, and everything together, it's really important. I want to be around people who are positive—not Pollyanna-like, but who are sincere about what they're doing. Attitude is a big thing.

RF: I have noticed that, in the studio, you're so agreeable and willing to do whatever anybody wants.

TI: I've found that, in the studio, it's really imperative that you at least give everybody's idea a chance. Even if you think it's the dumbest idea in the world, go ahead and see what that person was hearing or going for. Sometimes, trying someone else's idea will kind of set you off in a direction that will bring something more to that idea, and also lead you to play something you would never have thought of. That openness is really important.

RF: You mentioned once that Kenny is somewhat parts oriented in the studio. I wondered how much freedom you have with him?

TI: It depends. On a song like "This Is It," that was pretty much mine. But then, on the song you saw today, "Footloose," Kenny had a very definite idea of the drum part he wanted. Sometimes he'll have a skeletal idea, and we will fill in the pieces as we go along. We'll hear a playback and say, "Well, maybe that needs a little something there." Kenny is a real craftsman in the studio. It's kind of a dichotomy too because live, like we were just talking about, he's so free. I think it goes back to what I was saying earlier: They are two totally different canvases.

RF: You're a master at dynamics, and Kenny's vocals are really dynamic. The two of you together are beautiful between the push of the drums and his voice, like on "Heart To Heart."

TI: I really like that track.

RF: And "I Gotta Try" and "This Is It," which really reach an emotional level. Live, you can really feel that energy come across.

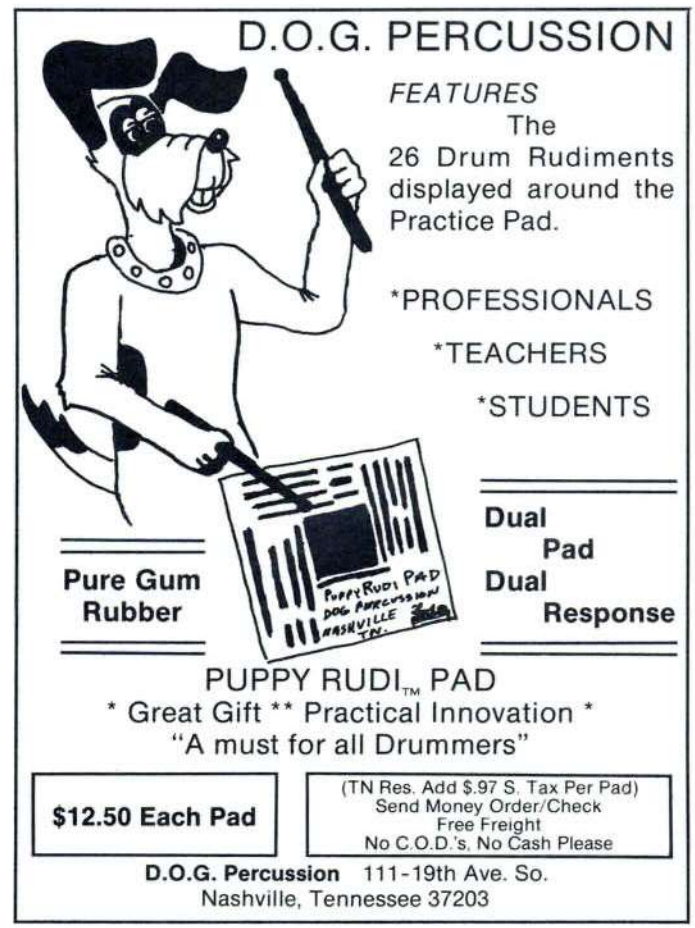
TI: Fortunately, the tunes that Kenny writes really lend themselves to extreme dynamics. A song like "This Is It," for example, is really delicate at the beginning, but it has that low boil, and by the time you hit the chorus, you slam the 2 and 4. The material really kind of dictates what dynamics are appropriate. I'm lucky that Kenny is the composer that he is and that he is as musical as he is. I just love the color differences that exist in the course of a song, which might go from a whisper to a roar and back to a whisper. It really draws you in as a listener.

RF: And then you'll do something like "Junkanoo Holiday," which is a totally different feel.

TI: That's sort of a calypso feel. It's something that I sort of borrowed from Gadd but then changed a little bit.

RF: You were talking before about some of the tracks where you came up with ideas. Could you talk about some of the tracks that you're fondest of, and why? Hit me with Kenny's first and then we'll talk about some of the others.

TI: Of course "This Is It." I'll always be grateful that I got to play



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drums for that song. It is such a great song and I was always pleased with the part I came up with. "Heart To Heart" I like an awful lot too. There's a song called "Wait A Little While" on *Nightwatch* that I really like. I think it's one of Kenny's strongest tunes. He says he woke up one morning and the thing just flowed out effortlessly. I really like the chorus pattern that Hawkins and I came up with. It's kind of a backwards thing that was just right for the song. There's another song on the album *Keep The Fire* that I really like, called "Who's Right, Who's Wrong." It just goes through so many different movements, even though it seems to push a little bit during the instrumental, [laughs] That's on me, but I still like it.

I like trying to be inventive with whatever part I play on someone's record; I don't want to sound like everybody else. Of course, sometimes you just can't help it. The producer—who we laughingly call a "reducer"—will sometimes say, "Can you split the difference there, put a smile on it and play a little less." Inevitably you end up sounding like everybody else on certain things. Whenever I can, I try to play something that is mine, but it must lend itself to the song too.

RF: How did you come up with "Heartlight"? There's a real neat feel to that song.

TI: Actually that was done in pieces. That whole percussion introduction was originally a whole lot longer. We tagged that onto the front after we had completed the piece. Steve Forman actually did most of the percussion stuff at the beginning. I wish you could have heard it before we pulled out a lot of stuff. It probably wasn't appropriate to the song, but it was a great sounding percussion piece. It finally started sounding like a factory, though, because there was so much happening. But man, it was great. I did some hi-hat in it and a couple of other things. We just really took that feel from Kenny's acoustic guitar part. I liked coming out of the last chorus. I pulled sort of an Andy Newmark trick, playing into the next bar, coming out on 2. I love Andy Newmark's playing. He's really a stylist—real nasty sounding and sassy—and I dig that.

RF: I'm surprised that was done in pieces.

TI: Some things just work out that way. A lot of times you'll do a basic track, and for whatever reason, they'll wipe it down to just the drum track because the guitar or the bass is a little out of tune or something. That happens more than people probably realize. My favorite tracks are the ones where there are four musicians in there who just nail it.

RF: Has there been any of that with Kenny?

TI: Oh yeah, in fact a bunch of them. That song I mentioned, "Who's Right, Who's Wrong," was done with Brian Mann, George Hawkins, Mike Hamilton and myself just straight through. The only things that were added were the horns and the background vocals. Michael Jackson came in and sang. In fact, most of that album was done that way. It just seems to be over the last couple of years that we've been doing it mostly the other way. I'm sure the advent of the Linn machine and trying to get that super clean instrument track is why it's been done more in pieces.

RF: I assume that Kenny brings in tunes in all kinds of different stages.

TI: Absolutely, and in various stages of completion. With the original Loggins band, we all contributed to the arranging and the finishing of the songs, which is really fun. I really love that. I'm not a very accomplished guitar player, but I do play guitar and I have a musical ear, so I really enjoy anything that I'm able to contribute musically and vocally. I still sing with Kenny on occasion. I play harmonica too. I played harp on the *Nightwatch* album on "Down And Dirty." It's kind of going by me now, though. I'm losing my lip because I haven't played very much lately. I want to get back into it because I love the harp. I'm an old blues freak. I love Little Walter and all those cats. It's just that I've been thinking only drums lately.

RF: Do you feel the fact that you play other instruments has anything to do with the fact that you have such a musical approach to the drums?

TI: Yeah, I think so. But I think that if I didn't play any other instruments, I would still approach the drumset musically because I hear it that way.

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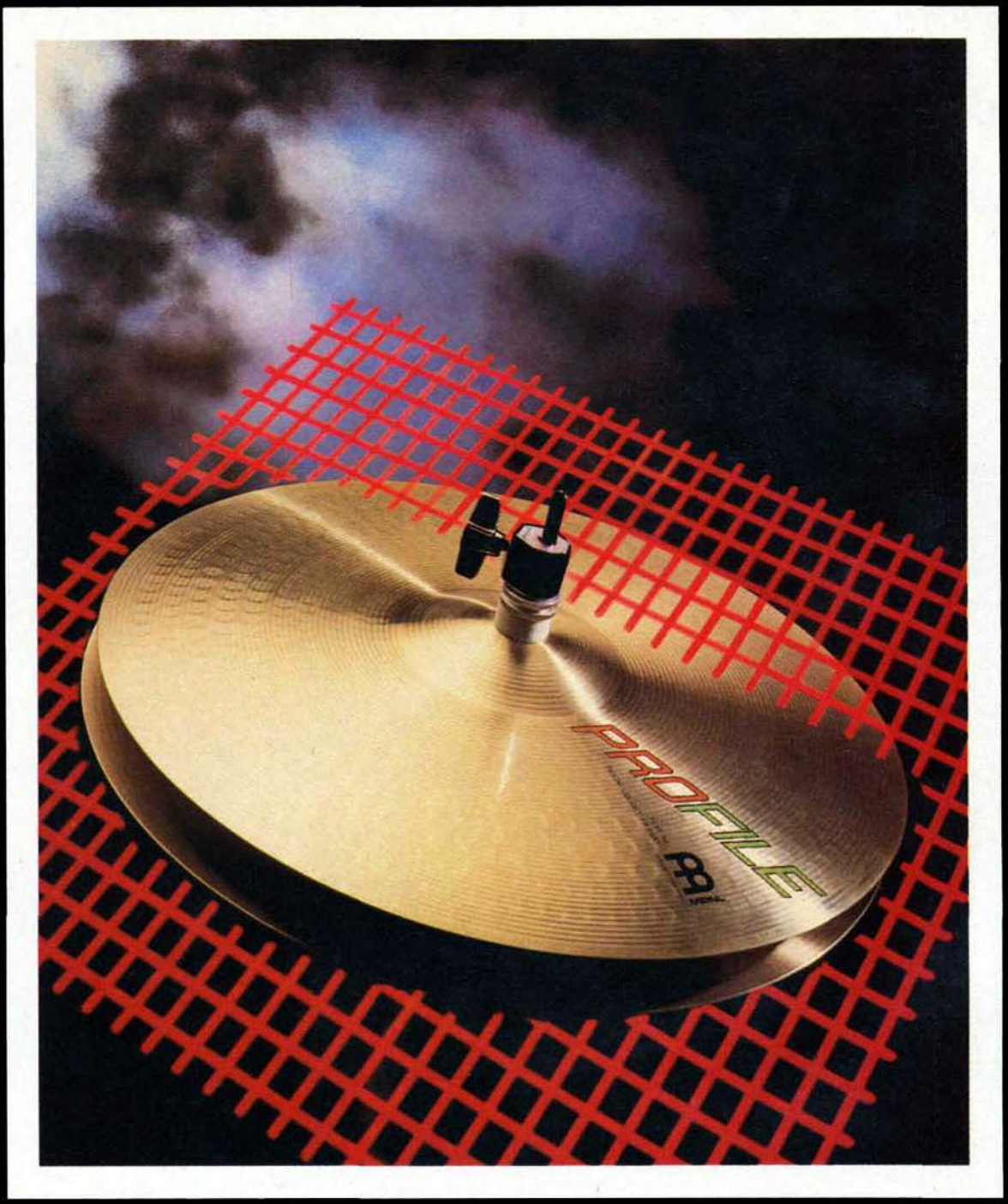

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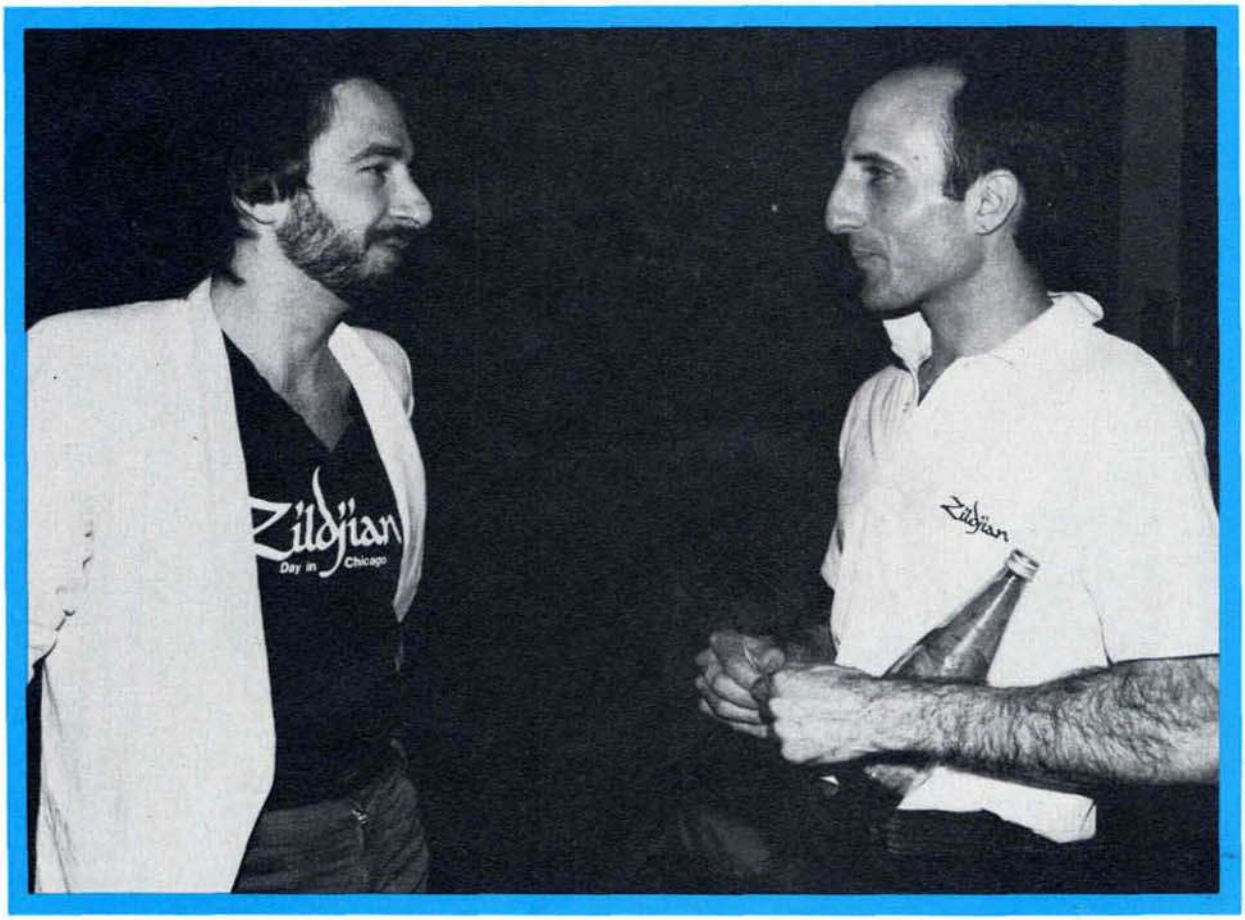

Photo by Lissa Wales

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RF: A lot of people say that the drumset isn't a melodic instrument.
TI: That's complete bullshit. The drums are extremely melodic and I think they should be approached that way—not limited to timekeeping. Listen to Tony Williams. That's why I play a lot of drums, because with a greater number of tom-toms, you increase the melodic range of the instrument.
RF: You just mentioned Tony Williams, some of your favorite Loggins' tracks are jazz flavored, and you mentioned "committing jazz crimes." You seem to have a real affection for jazz.
TI: There is that affection. I've played in jazz situations before, but I'm not, in any true sense, a jazz player. I had the privilege of working with Bob James for a week on the road and I played with Herbie Mann in New York City one night. I've done some jazz-esque gigs, but by no means can I hold my own in a straight-ahead bebop situation. There's just an attitude, more than anything, that I can bring from jazz to pop music. It's a little freer in approach.
RF: Do you think that makes you more willing to take chances?
TI: Yeah, that's a lot of it too—particularly live. But in the studio I can carry it over by just trying to do something different. Kenny's music and the way he approaches it is malleable enough that I can really do things I wouldn't normally get to do.
RF: What about some difficult-to-get tracks?
TI: There was one on the Gary Wright album *[The Right Place]* called "I Really Want To Know You." I like the track, but the interesting thing about it was that, the way Gary likes to record, everything is completed before the drums come in. He will complete the record with a Linn machine, and then I, or someone else will come in and drop the drums in. Then they usually wipe the Linn. On this particular track, he had inadvertently wiped the Linn track before I came into play. There were these big, long, football-type whole notes at times, which really didn't have any meter going on. When you're playing to a track that's already been recorded, that track doesn't bend at all. If there really isn't any guideline, at times, it's difficult to lock in. It took a while to get this one just right, and he was saying he didn't know if that song was ever going to work. Then the finished product was beautiful and it turned out to be a hit record. He and 1 were laughing about it; he was saying, "It is always the sleeper that people dig."

There was another song on that album called "I Want To Be Close To You." That was the only track we did with bass and drums at the same time, and real bass as opposed to synth bass. George Hawkins and I went in and did that one together. Again, it kind of has that Caribbean-esque attitude to it, which George and I always seem to do well.

There was a song called "I Think I Know Too Much," on the last Tom Snow album *[Hungry Nights].* They allowed me the freedom to go ahead and do what a drummer could do instead of having the producer dictate a stock part. Dean Parks is a wonderful producer and, like Kenny, he's very drum oriented. We collaborated and really had fun imposing different parts—not your standard hackneyed 2 and 4 all the time. And I like the sound on that record—the overall fatness of the snare drum and the toms. The toms are real big, yet still have that natural sound. It didn't sound processed and it had the definition of the cymbals. Jeremy Smith is an excellent engineer.
RF: How do you approach something where you're asked to create a part?
TI: I guess, like every good studio drummer, I go to the most obvious first. Oftentimes the obvious is just the right thing.
RF: Why do you want to do studio work in addition to your Kenny Loggins gig?
TI: I really enjoy it. It feels so great to have something in the can that you know is technically perfect, inventive, and also sonically devastating. Knowing that it's indelibly there really feels good. I know that a lot of people say they need a balance of studio and live, and I'm no different. I'd go crazy if all I did was play in the studio, because there's that real open end and newness of playing live every night that is really important to me. But I dig the studio, and I enjoy working with such a variety of people. Day to day you go from one musical genre to another, and an entirely new set of musicians. I think you learn so much by being able to go from one

situation to another.
RF: Do you feel that doing other sessions helps keep your gig with Kenny fresh?
TI: Oh absolutely. That's why Kenny really encourages it. He's always anxious to hear what we've been up to.
RF: What is the ideal studio situation for you?
TI: Probably to come into a situation where the songs themselves are really great, and you can sink your teeth into them. Also I like to be playing with musicians who are really accomplished on their instruments, coupled with a producer who invites input from those musicians. It's important to have an artist who is either secure enough to trust the producer, or who is at least capable of making a decision. The most frustrating thing is the artist who says, "Well, it's not right, but I don't know what's not right about it." When that sort of thing happens, it really can be kind of trying. And I love an engineer who is a drum freak. Sonics play such an important part.
RF: How often are you required to use a click track?
TI: It depends on the song. "Heart To Heart" was done without a click track, whereas a song like "Imagination," from the same album, was done with a click. I think one has to be kind of loose about whether to click or not to click. There are times when it's a definite must, but other times it can get in the way and can detract from the musicality. But it doesn't matter to me either way. The only time I don't dig it is when a song needs to breathe and then there's the rigidity of the click—the Chinese click torture.
RF: Isn't it difficult to establish yourself as a studio player when you have a steady gig to contend with?
TI: Absolutely. It's next to impossible to really get a roll going when you go on the road for a month, and then come back for a couple of weeks. That's why at some point in my career I will lessen my road involvement. I want to be able to let people know that I'm in town and that they can call me. It's so competitive; every week there's some new drummer moving in from somewhere, who is going to *be* here. I like going from one session in the daytime to one at night. I really like being booked up to the point that I'm eating, sleeping and drinking drums.

Photo by Laura Friedman

by Robin Tolleson

Gerry Brown

Gerry Brown isn't sure what to call it—fate, destiny, chance—but whatever it was, the timing for his return to the U.S. was impeccable. The first phone call he made after arriving back wound up landing him a job in Lionel Richie's touring outfit. It may take you a minute to think of a better gig than that.

"Gerry Brown?" asks Brown. "Yeah, I've heard of him. Isn't he in Europe?" He laughs about his own lack of recognition in the States. After playing some choice gigs in the mid to late '70s, notably with Chick Corea (Return To Forever), Stanley Clarke, and Larry Coryell, Brown was one of the more highly regarded young drummers. After putting out several albums with bassist John Lee, he decided to move to Europe. His return to the American music scene couldn't have come in a more pronounced way than with the super hot Richie.

Brown was born in Philadelphia in 1951, at the advent of the TV age, and started getting rhythmic at the age of four. He remembers watching the *Arthur Godfrey Show* and being fascinated with the drummer. "I'd say, 'Look at this cat. Wow!' I'd like to know who it was, myself," he says. "I never did find out. I'd pull out these cookie cans, and I had some makeshift sticks. I'd start banging away, and my parents said, 'Hmmm. Maybe he's got some talent.' "

His parents took him to a music center in West Philadelphia when he was five, and he began studying drums. For seven years he studied with Elaine Watts. "We'd do the rudiments, and then work on different rhythms, mambos, cha-chas and stuff. She'd play xylophone over that. Then she'd give me a xylophone lesson and get those chops together. Maybe then I'd play a solo-type thing on xylophone and she'd play a rhythm on the drums. We did those kinds of exercises back and forth, which was not bad when you think about it. With most drummers, at that time, it was just drums, you know."

Once or twice a week for a couple hours, Brown attended Settlement Music School and studied with Alan Abel of the Philadelphia Orchestra. It was a special time, according to Brown, because there were so many excellent classical percussionists hanging around the school. *"Bad* percussion cats," he says. "These cats are reading four mallets like you read the newspaper. At the same time I was listening to all this R&B music. I have a brother who's eight years older than I am. He was always listening to jazz stuff. My father listened to the blues—Ray Charles, Sarah Vaughan, Gloria Lynn, these big band arrangements and stuff."

In junior high school, Brown met bassist Stanley Clarke. "We were running kind of parallel, doing the heavy classical stuff, but then we started slipping in all these jazz and bebop licks on the side." He feels that his classical training has helped in later musical situations. "When you have that classical background there shouldn't be anything that's too difficult for you. You should be able to get around it."

In the high school all-city band, Brown played with bassist John Lee and began their musical relationship. After graduating Overbrook High, where he took courses in music theory and harmony, Brown attended the Philadelphia Music Academy. "They not only had big bands, but jazz theory and arranging courses, which was great," he says. "As a drummer, you're dealing so much with the rhythmic side that you have to be careful not to forget about the harmonics. You have to balance it out. Drummers tend to be heavily one-sided. Even when you're playing drums, think about pitch. When you play a fill, try to be melodic."

Brown describes the healthy rivalries that emerged during those days. "Some people in Philly were into Tony Williams and Ron Carter as the rhythm section. And then you had the people who were into Elvin Jones and Jimmy Garrison. They used to have battles like, 'Yeah, well Tony's alright, but Elvin's what's happenin'.' Personally, I had allegiance to both. I figure if you're dedicated too much to one, you miss something somewhere else. You have to try to keep it open."

In 1971, Brown got a gig in New York City with Panamanian saxophonist Carlos Garnett. It did a lot for Gerry's confidence to be playing in New York and have musicians coming by to check him out. One night it was drummer-composer Norman Connors. "He stood by the side of the stage and kind of gave me the heavy stare for five minutes. That's alright. I saw him there, and then I went back, concentrated, and said, 'Okay, let me give him something to see.' "

In the summer of '71, Brown worked as a show drummer at a hotel in the Catskill Mountains with John Lee, backing performers like Buddy Greco, George Kirby and Eartha Kitt. "It was great for the reading chops. We had an hour rehearsal. Afterward, we played a dance set with the dance book of about 150 hits. Then we did the first show for an hour and a half, and that was alright. An hour later, we had the late show. The performer who did the late show came from another hotel. By the time he got to where we were, it was a half hour before the show, and we couldn't rehearse or anything. He passed out the books and the conductor said, 'Okay, saxophones watch letter A. Letter B, okay, sign to sign, coda to coda, out. Next.' We played six nights a week. For the summer it was great. You could play all this music and meet some different people. The money was great."

Brown went to Europe for the first time in 1972. "I was 21 years old, and that was a big experience,"he says. "It was like, 'Oh, Europe, ah! Let's go there and find out what it's about.' " He shared a loft rehearsal space with John Lee. "I've been very lucky coming up, playing with Stanley, playing with Charles Fambrough, and playing with John Lee. Alphonso Johnson was also at the college, in the background at that time. Anthony Jackson was there a couple of times too. It really helps to be playing with someone you can joke with and have a lot of fun with, but someone who, at the same time, you can have a lot of respect for and vice versa. We could say

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by Robin Tolleson

Peter Donald

If Peter Donald seems a bit cocky, lashing out at his drums with a cigarette hanging loosely from his lips, you must remember—he has a right to be. He's played with pop acts like Olivia Newton-John, Peter Allen, and Helen Reddy. He brings home the bacon with television and film work, notably Grease, Xanadu, The Merv Griffin Show, *and* Fridays. *After sitting in the drum chair of the acclaimed Akiyoshi-Tabackin Big Band through eight albums, he joined up with one of modern time's more eclectic guitarists, Berklee colleague John Abercrombie, in 1978.*

Donald grew up in Woodside, California, and moved to Boston al the age of 14. When we talked, he was enjoying being back in the San Francisco area, stretching his limits in a series of dates with the Abercrombie group. Leaning back and squinting as he bashes his Yamahas, or playing a feather-light roll on a cymbal, Donald exudes confidence. Some might think he's flaunting it. But the drummer's swagger is a personable one, both on stage and off. His unaffected grin bursts with the enthusiasm of the moment.

RT: Had you started playing drums before you moved to Boston?

PD: Very little. Actually, 1 first owned a drum when I was ten. And then I got a funny little Woolworth's drumset when I was 12. I studied locally here with a guy named Bob Goodrow, for about a year. Then I really didn't do much with it after that formally until I started studying with Alan Dawson when I was 17, which basically lasted for five years. I went to Berklee for two years full time as a composition major. And 1 studied privately on piano, theory, harmony, and stuff like that at different points.

RT: Did Alan Dawson teach you a rudimental approach to playing?

PD: At first it was rudimental. He worked a lot from the George Stone book, *Stick Control,* and he put me through the whole Carl Gardner series of books, which was legitimate snare drum reading. Then at some point, because I did have a fair amount of drumset facility from informal playing that I had done, he used *Stick Control* for a coordination book. We would just substitute the limbs—the right foot might play the left-hand parts—and get them used to different ways of playing. Then I went through a lot of other more conventional books—the Wilcoxon books, and the Ted Reed book. There are a lot of different ways to do that *Syncopation* book, and other more advanced reading stuff. So it was a real good, firm basis for playing the instrument. Plus, even though I never really took the writing thing to any professional conclusion, it was a great help to go to school and study arranging. As a player, it just makes you a lot more aware of how things are fitting together. The drums can be pretty destructive if they're not played musically. Also, most arrangers really don't know how to write for drums, so you have to use your ears a lot more. A lot of people do, in order to interpret the music.

RT: Figuring out what the arranger *meant.*

PD: Right. Anyhow, during the last two years I was studying with Alan, he started doing the Elliot Fine-Marvin Dahlgren book, *Four-Way Coordination For The Drum Set,* which is the best drum book of the '80s for coordination. It's just rudiments, but using all four limbs. You feel like a total beginner when you start playing it. I got all the way through the book, very slowly, and it comes out in my playing more and more, but it's really not conscious. One of my big thrills was that 1 finally met Marvin Dahlgren in Minneapolis a few years ago when I was in Toshiko's band. He flies planes, owns a drum shop, plays shows and the symphony, and writes all these books. He's a great guy—an unusual human being.

RT: When you're playing now, do you think in terms of the rudiments, or do you just play? Is it a subconscious thing?

PD: No, I don't think in terms of playing rudiments. There are patterns that I play that are built on rudiments, which have become part of a sort of constant flow. They can be shifted around to sound different all the time. But I'm not as rudimental as some drummers are. There are drummers of my generation who are more aware of what they are playing on the instrument, technically. The beauty of Alan was that he didn't try to produce junior Alan Dawsons. He's quite rudimentally oriented, because of the era that he comes from, but he didn't try to force you to do anything that was musically against your principles. So that was really nice.

RT: Your rock and funk playing seems very together.

PD: I've played a lot of it over the years. When I first moved to L.A., I played with Olivia Newton-John and Helen Reddy—mostly MOR acts. I also played with Peter Allen a lot. And I always enjoy doing it. Abercrombie and I started out playing in blues bands—like Ray Charles-type bands—and funk bands.

RT: In Boston?

PD: Yeah. So I've always liked doing it. I reached a point, though, where I realized that you can't stylize yourself in two completely different kinds of music that way. And I realized that I was basically a jazz musician. As I started to do some pop record dates in L.A., I realized that my creativity had been lying in that area. But 1 still play other kinds of music. The studio work I do in Los Angeles is mostly for television—the all-around variety stuff, which is a dwindling situation now. But the last half-dozen years, that's how I've paid the bills.

RT: You seem to have a lot of fun playing around with polyrhythms. I catch a playful look in your eyes when you start to play something "offbeat."

PD: Yeah, I feel there should be a playfulness in music, without it being silly. It doesn't have to be totally playful; it can still be serious and playful. Also there's a certain energy coming from that. Everything doesn't have to be epic and morose, or important. I mean, this should be fun, but not fun in a superficial sense. It should be deeply gratifying also. So there is that element of why I do stuff sometimes. At times I just do things and I screw up. I laugh instead of getting upset about it, un-

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Brown continued from page 86

to one another, 'No man, don't play that there. That won't work. Let's try something else.' Maybe one of us would get a little hot under the collar then, but an hour later we'd all agree that it was burnin'."

Brown's first gig in Europe was with flautist Chris Hinze. "It was his interpretation of jazz, which was very European. So John and I, after months of just checking out Europe, Chris and the whole scene, said 'Okay, we've been playing it this way. Let's play it like we would in America. To hell with this European idea.' John and I would take the classical textures, kind of discard them, and start driving it more. This forced Chris to play, which, in turn, forced us to play even more." According to Brown, the European audiences responded enthusiastically to their playing. "It was like, 'Hey man, that's what we've been hearing, and these guys are doing it right in front of our eyes.' "

Brown found it hard to stay away from the States for too long. He started feeling like he was on the outside looking in. He moved back to America and began playing with violinist Michael Urbaniak in January of 1975. Urbaniak's group would occasionally do shows with Larry Coryell and with Return To Forever. When Alphonse Mouzon left Coryell's group in '75, Brown took his place in The Eleventh House.

Soon Brown and John Lee landed a recording contract with United Artists. In 1976, they released the jazz and funk flavored *Still Can't Say Enough,* featuring the likes of Reggie Lucas, Ray Gomez, Mtume, David Sanborn, the Brecker Brothers, Ernie Watts and many others. Later that year Brown did Stanley Clarke's *School Days* album. Then he joined Return To Forever, following Lenny White in that chair. That RTF band, featuring a horn section, Gayle Moran on vocals and keyboards, Chick, Stanley and Gerry, recorded the *Musicmagic* album, toured, and put out a live four-record set. The arranging was adventurous, to say the least.

"All that training from before came in handy as hell," says Brown. "The first two days I was reading the drum part, and every so often Chick would say, 'Okay, you don't have this horn lick. I want you to write this in your part.' I said, 'Chick, why don't you just copy off a piano part, because it always has the horn licks there. It'll be easier for me to read. We can get a flow going.' That made it easier for everybody all around. If it was not written in my part, I could just go to the piano part." Brown was playing one of the first sets of North drums on that RTF tour.

When Return To Forever disbanded, Brown continued working on his recording career with John Lee. By 1979, they had changed labels to CBS and released *Chaser* with guitarist Eef Albers and saxman Bobby Malach. But they were becoming disappointed by their records' lack of acceptance. "We got our asses kicked, but we know a bit about the business now," he says. "That went on until about 1980, and at that point, I'd had it up to here. I moved to the West Coast and was working a bit with the Brothers Johnson, but at that time, their thing was kind of trailing off. So around the middle of '80 I decided to go back to Europe. I knew enough people there so that it would be no problem to work."

Brown lived in West Berlin for a year, then in Hamburg for a year. He played with musicians like Philip Catherine, Joachim Kiihn (keyboardist with whom he recorded *Springfever* in 1976) and Jasper Van't Hof. "I was doing a lot of projects with the radio bands there in Germany," he says. "The radio stations would have featured American artists coming over to do a week-long project, which would be recorded. Sometimes it would be on television. They had people like Clark Terry, Michael Gibbs, and Gil Evans. I did a percussion thing with four drummers from South America for the Berlin Jazz Festival. I was teaching at the high school for music in Hamburg. As far as Germany was concerned, that was really a very good situation, because there are a lot of drummers there who wanted to learn a lot and were willing to listen. So I was more or less a hero there. There were things, for example, that they read in *Modern Drummer* Magazine which they didn't understand, so I was there to say, 'Well, this is what they're talking about.' Then they understood it."

Brown was playing in an acoustic jazz setting with Joachim Kiihn around Europe. "It was great to play with a nice 18" bass drum, two K. Zildjians, and a small basic setup. It's always a challenge to go from what I was doing with the North set to a small jazz set. With every set it is a challenge to see what's there, what drums you have, what pitches, and to think about your possibilities—just to make the best of it."

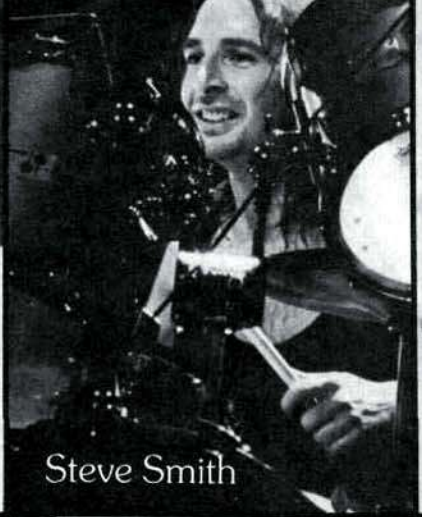
Meanwhile, things at home were starting to get interesting. Wilbert Terrell, who knew Gerry from when he was road manager for the Brothers Johnson, was now working with Lionel Richie. Terrell wanted to get in touch with Gerry. He called Brown's mother in Philadelphia in June of '83, and she told him Gerry was doing real well over there. "You know how parental pride can come across in a conversation," Brown laughs. "She almost blew it for me by talking it up for me and saying how well I was doing."

On August 3, Brown returned to the States for a visit. He asked his mom for Terrell's number and gave him a call. He remembers the conversation well.

"Gerry, when did you get in?" Terrell asked.

"Oh, about an hour and a half ago."

"Look, man, this Lionel Richie thing is still not solved. We've got Rick Marotta



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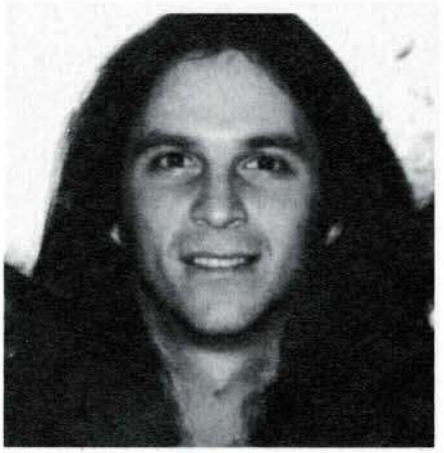

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and Neil Stubbenhaus coming in tonight for an audition. Lionel wants a show drummer who can do this and that. I want Lionel to see and hear you. How soon can you come out?" The fact that Brown had just lost six hours flying did not impress Terrell. "You've got to come out to L.A. tomorrow morning."

After seeing Brown's performance on the 1983 Richie tour, it's certainly easy to understand how he got the gig. He has a fluent, seemingly effortless approach, and can summon great bursts of power. As far as the showmanship goes, Brown brought roars from the crowd with some amazing stick twirling and drumming combinations. He was completely in control.

It was August when Brown flew to L.A. and was soon calling friends in Germany to tell them it would be, er, February before he would be back. "I couldn't turn this down," Brown explains. "It was like someone telling me, 'Here man, take these dice and roll boxcars.' You have to realize I was in Europe and I knew that I had to go back to the States eventually."

Brown says he was thinking of returning to the States for good after the 1984 elections, "with optimism in the air." He was doing well in Germany, playing with the likes of Kiihn and doing the radio broadcasts in a studio with big bands with charts, which is something that doesn't happen on the radio in the U.S. "But what they don't have there is the choice of hearing the music that you want to hear anytime of the day. That's what they miss. I think that's the difference between American musicians and the European musicians. Anytime you wanted to hear some popular music at two or three o'clock in the morning when you were growing up, you could always hear it. This cat can't hear that in Europe. It's not happenin'. He can hear it for maybe one hour in the evening, or a little bit in the afternoon, or through all these political talks and stuff like that. But it gets into no groove at all. There just isn't stuff constantly coming at you. When I was growing up there was always the R&B station, always the rock station, the blues station, the country station and the jazz station. They don't have that."

Lionel Richie is more of a pop artist than people are used to hearing Gerry Brown play with. Brown likes that. "I can finally dispel all rumors that people may have said. People are very quick to categorize. I played with Stanley and Chick, so people say, 'Yeah, he can do *that.'* I played with the Brothers Johnson but just not at the right time. I got on one of their last albums for one song. I played on one track of a Patrice Rushen album called *Posh,* which also was not enough. But now I'm on the Lionel Richie gig, and people say, 'Wasn't he in Europe? How did he get on the gig?' and then they hear how well the concerts are going. I'm sure people are scratching their heads, particularly in L.A."

Brown has been aware of Lionel, the Commodores and their music for many years. "Now that I've had the opportunity to play it over the course of this tour, all these old R&B licks I used to play started coming back even more. But now I'm older and have experience behind me, so it's fun to play. You'll probably see it on stage. You'll see how much fun the band is having. It's totally new to me. Yeah, I'm the new kid in town. So I feel obliged to kick ass every night. When you have the opportunity to play in front of this many people every night [13,000-15,000], the crowd just kicks you in the butt, man. I have to drive it. And fortunately Lionel is doing enough different things where I can use all the different techniques. I'm really happy that I can show all these things—play a soft ballad or something heavy and funky.

"It's great working with Sheila Escovedo in Lionel's band. She's a great percussionist. We work very well together, and I think we're going to be doing some clinics in the future." Brown has done clinics with Tama, and hopes to work something out now that he's playing Gretsch again. "I came back to Gretsch," he says. "I had my first Gretsch set when I was doing all that stuff in Europe in '72. It's happening. I'm using a power 10", a normal 12", 13", 16" floor tom, and a power 22" bass drum. For snare drums, I'm using a Ludwig *Black Beauty* with an engraving on it. I have a '36 *Radio King* from Paul Jamieson and a '29 Leedy from Jamieson. I also have one of the big Gretsch snare drums. I'm using the DW double pedal. It works really well. And I'm using Sabians. I was using the Sabian brilliant hi-hats. This will probably come out eventually. Paul had an idea, and he, Billy Zildjian and myself got it together. We drilled holes in the bottom hi-hat and put eight or nine rivets in it, about halfway in from the lip of the dome to the outside. We put them around. When it's closed, nothing happens, but when you open it, it adds another 10 K that the engineer would normally have to add on the board. It's great for me since I play in big places. I use Vic Firth *5Bs* or *2Bs* usually. Those sticks are true, man," Gerry smiles.

Brown worked on a six-hour instructional video while in Europe, and he hopes to get the chance to put a video together here. "I saw Steve Gadd's videocassette, and it was okay, but if you don't know about the rudiments and all that stuff you'd never know where that stuff came from. So I think you have to really build that up. You can't just say, 'I do this when I play this, and I do that when 1 play that.' For someone who's on my level, that's great. But it's the person in second or third grade that you want to go for.

"Get as much of a foundation on your instrument as you can," recommends Brown. "In my case, it was good to come

from the classical side of the drums, which is really rudimental snare drumming. It's good to know all those rudiments and it's good to know how to read. It certainly doesn't hurt." Now with Brown that knowledge is subconscious. "People in Europe will say, 'Yeah, man, we heard you at this gig and you played the figure ta ta-da ta-ta-da, etc. Which rudiments were those?'

"Don't ask me, man. It's coming from here [points to his head], but eventually it leaves there and just comes from here—where you're playing from your gut and your soul. It's just second nature. It's somewhere back there. You can always go back and check it out, but I'm not conscious of what rudiment I'm playing or anything like that. Drummers have to remember that they make the drums sound good, and not vice versa. You can have some lousy drums, but if you play them with the right attitude, no matter what they look like, the sound will come across somehow.

"I think the attitude is maybe 60%. There are a lot of drummers who don't have a lot of technique, but they have a hell of an attitude. Look at Charlie Watts, man. I think he's a prime example. He's still happenin'. Jeff Porcaro says he doesn't have that much technique but he's got that attitude, and it comes across."

And then there are some people, like Gerry Brown, who are possessed with outstanding technique and the kind of attitude it takes to provide that kick. Lionel Richie calls him "The Governor," an interesting play on words. On one hand, it's a tease about the flamboyant ex-governor of the state of California, Jerry Brown. In another sense, the drummer acts like a governor on a car, a device that controls the vehicle's speed by regulating the supply of fuel.

"Governor" G. Brown has the poise to keep the tempo uniform on a Richie ballad. He can also let loose and let fly, all night long. Noted drumician and industry leader Paul Jamieson is candid in his assessment of Gerry Brown's talent. "If the devil asked me what I wanted, I'd ask for Gerry's chops, and I'd take it from there."

Donald *continued from page 87*

less it's some huge, horrible mistake, like the end of some cut at a recording session that blows it for 20 people, and they've got to play it again. When you're playing this kind of music in this kind of environment, you're taking more chances. That's one of the reasons you're doing it—to take chances. Abercrombie can be very intense, very musical, very creative, and playful at times. Music should express all those things.

RT: Are you conscious of *not* coming in on the 1 beat after a fill? I've noticed that you stay off the 1.

PD: No, not anymore. I'm conscious if it needs to be done. I work in enough situations now where that's what you've got to do, but it's predictable if you keep doing it. I find that's the one thing I don't want to happen in the jazz situation—predictability. You have to have a form and you have to have a setup. Within that structure you try different things, and make it somewhat unpredictable—musical and thoughtful at the same time, and, of course, always swinging. So I always know where 1 is, obviously, but sometimes I'm just not going to play it. I know that the other band members know where it is too, and they don't need it. There are lots of different ways to play things—lots of different requirements. When I worked with Toshiko's big band, we would have five, six, or seven horn solos, and everybody wanted a different drummer—a different approach. That was a great learning experience for me. Basically it was giving four or five important soloists different things that they each required, and then the big band required something else. One soloist was very loose, another wanted it more structured, and I was happy to do it, as long as it would lead to the most effective music. So, yeah, I'm basically very conscious of it, but in a situation like this I feel very free. Whatever I do is going to be appropriate to the other people.

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PD: Yeah, it flows. Well, I think very melodically, and I think in terms of the harmonic structures of all the tunes. In fact, I don't even like to do drum solos unless I know the structure of the song, and have the changes in my head as well as the basic melody. Otherwise I can't think of things to play. That gives me a form to play with. There are free solos that I've done, a couple of which have been recorded, that I really like too. The drums become more coloristic. That's another area that's nice to do, but to do it all the time . . . The thing that drives me crazy is to hear drummers who, no matter what tune they're playing, end up playing the same drum solo. I'm always thinking in terms of the mood of the song and how the drums can alter it, change it, enhance it and color it.

RT: I noticed the dynamics in your solo last night. You started very forcefully and ended almost breathless.

PD: Well, dynamics are another tool you use for improvising, and they're especially important to drums. It's one of the few tools you have, because harmonically you have nothing to work with, and melodically you're very limited. What you do have are a lot of colors, textures, and given intervals between the drums. And dynamics is one of the ways that you can shape things. The predictable technique is to always start soft and end loud, but when I hear that a lot of times I say, "Well, why not start off soft, get loud, and then get not as loud." You can even be somewhat arbitrary, just to keep it interesting and not be predictable. So I like using dynamics a lot. Any one thing, after a while, becomes too much. If something is too soft you'll fall asleep. If something is too loud you get an earache. In music there should be a dynamic range in a presentation of any kind, to keep peoples' interest, and put them through different emotional trips. I think that John and I have found a volume level that's good for us. It's a base from which we can go either way. He can play extremely soft, but he likes to punch out too. I'm the same way. I don't want to be a slave to either end of the dynamic range. There's an old expression, "Dynamics? What do you mean? I'm playing as loud as I can."

RT: What are some of the differences between playing in a big band as compared to a combo situation?

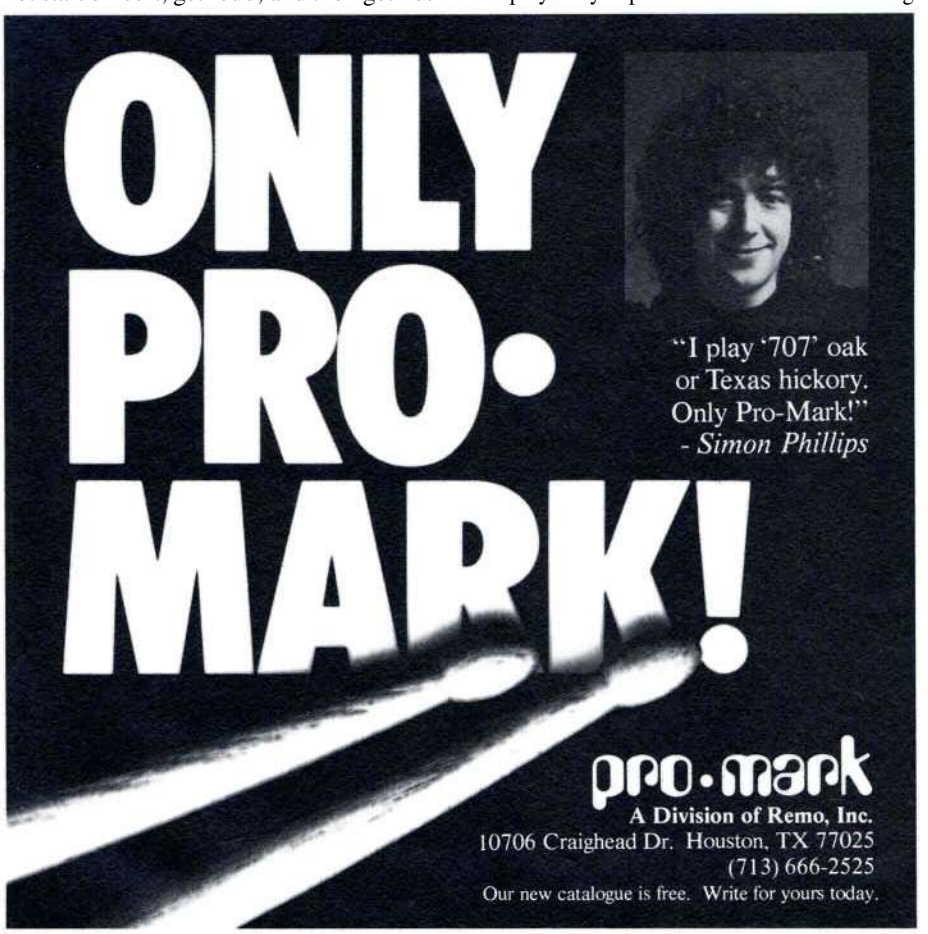
PD: In a big band, you have to consider the function of the instrument in the group, before you even start to think about being creative or flashy, or whatever it is you want to be, because you have 16 people who have different time conceptions and this and that. Basically you're responsible for putting all that together—you and the lead players, the bass player, and the rhythm section in general. But the drummer is certainly one of the key elements. Small group drummers have the freedom to play very hip creative fills and stuff. Big band drummers are sort of dealing with a dumb animal that's got to be banged over the head a little bit, and you've got to deliver 1 via Federal Express, right there on time. That takes some getting used to. I have played a lot of big bands over the years, but I've never lost my true small-group feel, which a lot of people like. A lot of musicians and bandleaders have dug the fact that they didn't have that sort of more obvious, flashy, big band thing. Other people didn't; they wanted it real obvious. Toshiko's band was very different, because it was a lot of different things. At times it was like a small group. At other times, she wanted to sound like Duke Ellington's band, and sometimes she wanted me to play like Elvin Jones. We had a real good working relationship about that; we could get together, discuss it, and work stuff out. But it wasn't like Basie's band where there is a specific sound, and a thing you do, which I would love. I'd love to play with his band for a while. It'd be great. But Basie's drummer has to play the obvious, big band style, because it's such a highly stylized form of music. You are dealing with a much larger group of people who are trying to play these parts, and they need help. Part of your job as drummer is to help out when the time gets weird, in any situation.

RT: Was going with Toshiko's band your first big break?

PD: Yeah, I had done a lot of playing in Boston, but Toshiko's band was the first organized band I'd been with of national and international note. And I was with it almost from the beginning. They asked me to come on about a year after it started. I stayed about five years, and that was the best big band that I've ever worked with, as far as musicianship and playing are concerned. It was an honor and a privilege to play with people like that. And her writing was really interesting. They're real good friends—real good people. I have a lot of good feelings about them, and a lot of respect for their talents. We all learned a great deal in that band because it was difficult music—stuff that seemed impossible when we first started to play it. Toshiko, to her credit, knew it wasn't. She just kept rehearsing it and kept playing it on gigs. So finally we'd think, "Well, this is impossible," and roar through it.

RT: Do you find drummers today breaking away from traditional roles of the cymbals and drums? Like keeping time more with toms and getting away from the ride cymbal?

PD: I've noticed a little of that. I saw King Crimson a little while ago, and Bill Bruford wasn't playing any cymbals. But apparently that was because Robert Fripp doesn't like cymbals because the overtones get mixed with the guitars. I kind of missed the cymbals. They could have used them a little bit more, but it was interesting. I think a lot of people were influenced by Steve Gadd because he got such a great



sound recording his drums. He did a lot of snare drum things, and the overall sound in your memory from him is his drum sound. I would think he is one of the people of that influence. And then maybe the Carribean and reggae things have helped people get away from that whole bebop cymbal sound, which I like to get away from. When I work with Latin percussionists and Brazilian musicians they love it when you play time on the drums, and just bash a cymbal every once in a while. Whereas with jazzers, if you start doing that too much they start to get nervous. They want to hear the higher sound of the cymbal. So I get away with what I can get away with. Once again, I want to try to make it as unpredictable as possible, without being mysterious.

RT: Ronald Shannon Jackson is another person who uses the drums a lot.

PD: Yeah, I've never heard him play, but I know he's a force to be dealt with. There's a lot to be said for that. It's just another way of playing the instrument which could be used very effectively. I like to use brushes as a change in color. It brings everything down.

RT: Do drummers have to learn more styles these days?

PD: It's definitely a more eclectic age for everyone—audiences as well as musicians. There are a few people who sort of say, "To hell with it, I'm going to play this way, and if it's 30 years old, I don't care." I kind of respect that, but on the other hand, I feel like this is a modern age and you could be a little more open. It doesn't mean you have to do everything and try to be trendy.

RT: Are you happy with your Yamaha drums?

PD: That's a great set of drums. They gave me several sets years ago when I was in Japan with Toshiko and John. They made four or five of these sets. I think they are made out of birch that's been cured for pianos—very expensive wood. They gave them to a few people with the possibility of marketing them, but they're very high priced. So I just happened to be over there. I've used them a lot for bebop playing, and with a little tuning I've gotten them so they'll fit more with the electric bass and guitar. They're capable of a lot of power and a lot of subtlety. They're built like an instrument. These things came out of the box sounding real good. And I use their other drums too for studio stuff in L.A.

RT: What size are your rack toms?

PD: 10" and 12", with a 14" floor tom, an 18" bass drum and a 5 1/2" snare drum. They also sent me a 22" bass drum, two other mount toms and a big floor tom. So I can turn it into a big rock 'n' roll set if I want to. As for cymbals—which I'm sure is going to be one of your next questions—it's a United Nations up there. Nobody's asked for my endorsement, and I probably wouldn't do it anyway. I have a Paiste ride cymbal, a Paiste flat cymbal, an old K. Zildjian on one side, with an A. Zildjian band cymbal on the bottom of the hi-hats, and a K. on the top. The band cymbal still has the grommet in it. It's real thick and heavy, and clear. I've had those cymbals for 18 years. I had a set of each. The band cymbals I bought from the Zildjian factory, and the K.s I bought somewhere else. The K.s were too dark and mushy, and the band cymbals were too heavy and clanky, but using them together has worked out very well.

RT: Do you use *Fiberskyn* heads?

PD: Only on the front of the bass drum. I use regular *Ambassadors.* They're the best. The *Fiberskyns* sound good, while they last. They get a nice mellow, dark sound, soft and kind of warm, but they go too fast. So I have the good old Remo *Ambassadors.*

RT: How about sticks?

PD: Made by Cappella. He makes all the sticks for the different drum shops. I use a stick that's sort of in between. I used to go back and forth; when I played louder things I used a bigger stick, and for soft stuff I used smaller sticks. It got to be a pain after a while, so these are kind of in between for me. They're the *Shelly Manne* model, and in New York they're called the *Mel Lewis* model. I love that. It's the same stick.

RT: You use your hi-hat in different ways, sometimes in non-time ways.

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PD: I accent with it and stuff. That came mainly from studying with Alan, because he uses it somewhat that way. And when 1 started playing with some of my mentors, people like Herb Pomeroy and Charlie Mariano, they hated the hi-hat cymbal on 2 and 4 as a constant. It drove them bananas. They wanted to hear something looser. They loved Pete LaRocca; at the time he played with Herb's band a lot. So 1 started doing it because of all these people I respected. I can use it either way now. There are times for doing that—breaking it up—and there are times to stamp on it and lay the time out. You have to know when to do certain things. If you do too much of any one thing it becomes predictable. Once again we get back to that word.

RT: You have a real free approach to the snare too.

PD: A lot of that is Alan. I have heard things I have recorded that sound sort of similar to Tony Williams, and that's Alan's influence—the touch and the rudimentary approach to playing the snare drum. I hear similarities between Tony and myself in that way, although I don't compare myself with him in any way, shape, or form in terms of a drummer. I think he's the last great jazz drummer of our generation. After that came Gadd and fusion. Tony was the last real innovator for pure jazz drumming. I don't like to classify drummers, but it's obvious Elvin Jones is a jazz drummer, Jeff Porcaro is a rock 'n' roll drummer, and they're both great drummers. They're both extraordinarily talented people, and the elements that have to be there for any drummer are there. They are just different styles of music.

RT: You were talking about tuning your drums to go into the studio. Do you tune them down in pitch?

PD: The drums that I use to record commercial music sound more like rock 'n' roll drums. On one of the records I did with John, I had them tuned very high. I used to tune my drums a lot lower. They're sort of lower now because I find that, in order to play with an electric bass, you have to change the sound of the bass drum and the overall approach. There has to be more punch because the electric bass has a lot of sound to it, and you're accenting the sound. With the upright bass it sounds kind of insensitive. I noticed that on certain records when drummers use studio drums with an upright bass, it sounds kind of clunky. Even though what they play may be great, it's not airy enough. Then I started tuning them higher too. I heard DeJohnette live with John a few years back, and he had them tuned really high. I remember talking with him about it, and he said, "Well, it's where you hear it." So I decided to tune them up just to see what it sounded like. And I like it.

RT: Is your snare head pretty tight?

PD: Yeah, because I can play rolls on it, and be pretty subtle on it. On a real rock 'n' roll snare drum, you can't do anything. In my cartage case I've got four snare drums for different situations, and some of them you can't do anything on except hit them. There's no way you can play rolls on those drums. They get that thuddy, deep-throated sound. It's a great sound, but it's not good for all around. That's why Gadd has always amazed me. He's got that snare that he can do all of that on—make it sound real big and powerful, then play it real delicate. I'd like to know how he does it. I think one reason is that he's got incredible technique.

RT: Do you leave your bottom heads on for recording?

PD: Oh definitely. My feeling always has been that, if people know what they're doing when recording, a drum that sounds good to the ear will sound good recorded. The problem is, room acoustics change so much and drums can sound radically different in different rooms. They'll sound great in this room, but the next hour you'll take them to some other place and they'll sound horrible. However, if you have a basically good-sounding set, then I think the alterations for recording should be minimal. I mean, the bottom heads should be taken off sometimes in certain studios, and they can EQ it to sound more airy. But the drums 1 use for recording sound good to the ear. They have been dampened down a little, and they all have the heads on the bottom. I used to use the single-headed concert toms, which sounded great recorded, and actually sounded really good live too, but they're very limiting drums, because you can't really do anything on them. You can just play single stroke, because there's no response—no air chamber. Of course, engineers love them because there are no overtones. But that varies from situation to situation, from room to room, and from person to person.

RT: What's your practice schedule like?

PD: I do it in spurts here and there when I haven't played for a while, or when I have something special that I want to work out. But I don't have a regular routine. I have a routine that I use to warm up whenever I practice, and I always practice with a metronome. I have a little rhythm machine that has a metronome attachment and earphones. That makes it seem like playing with a click track. I think that's real good. It seems to free me up a little more. I've got a little something there to guide me. And it makes me realize, "Oh yeah, I speed up there when I try that." But I don't believe in being a slave to it either. I know musicians who've done a lot of studio work, and who, if something isn't grooving, will say, "Turn the click on." Wait a minute, man. I mean they're right in a certain sense. But they get so used to playing with it that it becomes the answer to all the problems.

RT: Do you have any advice for a drummer who's just starting out?

PD: I would say get as much musical education as you can. Just be a good craftsman. I think musicians in general should be more aware of the business of music. I mean they don't have to *do* it, but they have to know what they are dealing with to make a living in the business because it's getting harder. There are more and more well-trained young musicians coming out of these schools, because music education is big business now. Also, due to technology and the times we're in, there are fewer jobs. That's going to make it harder for musicians to work, even though there are more musicians coming out who are qualified to do so. I think, for musicians in general, there are going to be major changes in the foreseeable future in terms of how we operate and make a living. So I'm just saying, prepare yourself in that way—academically in music, and academically in general.

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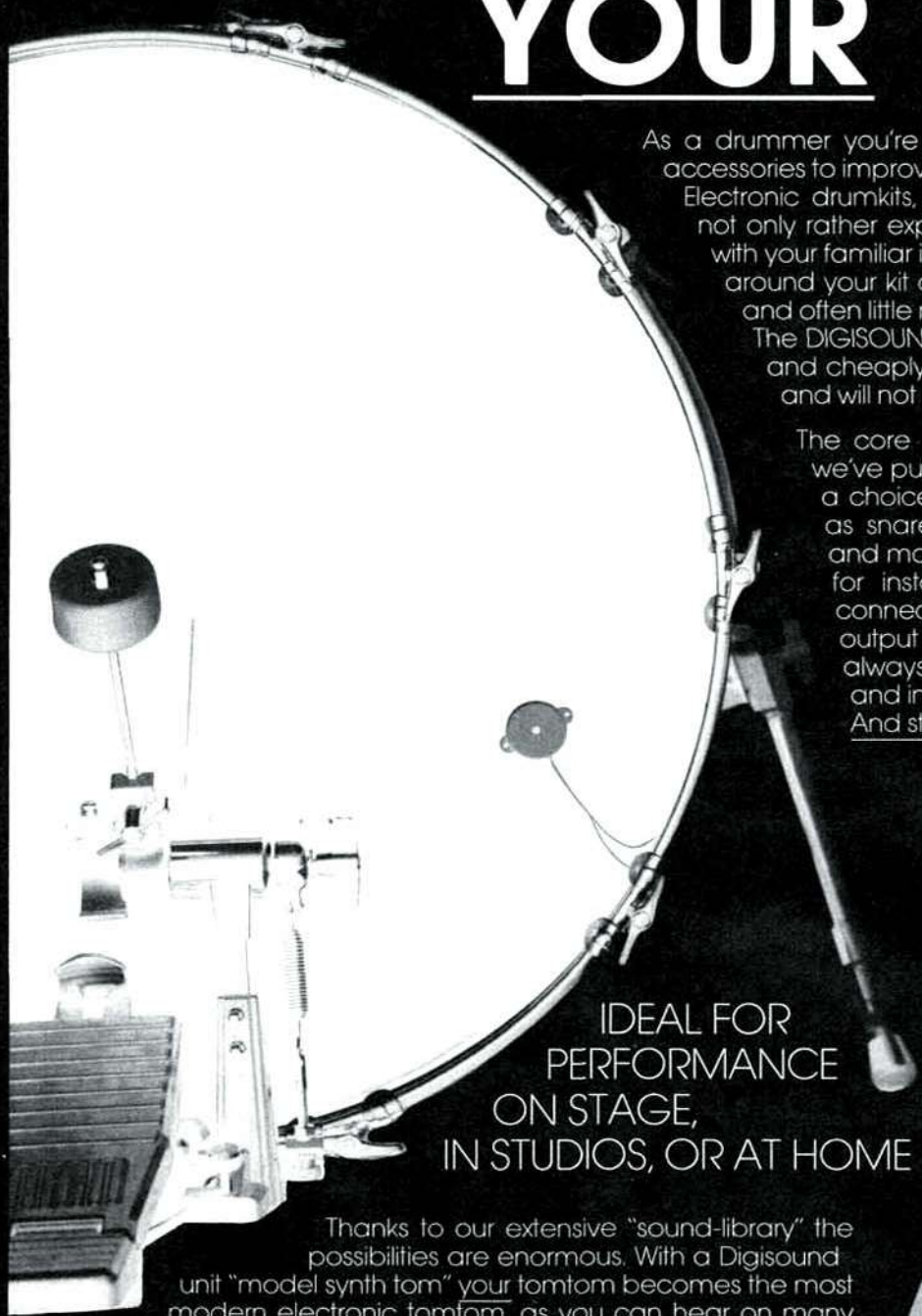

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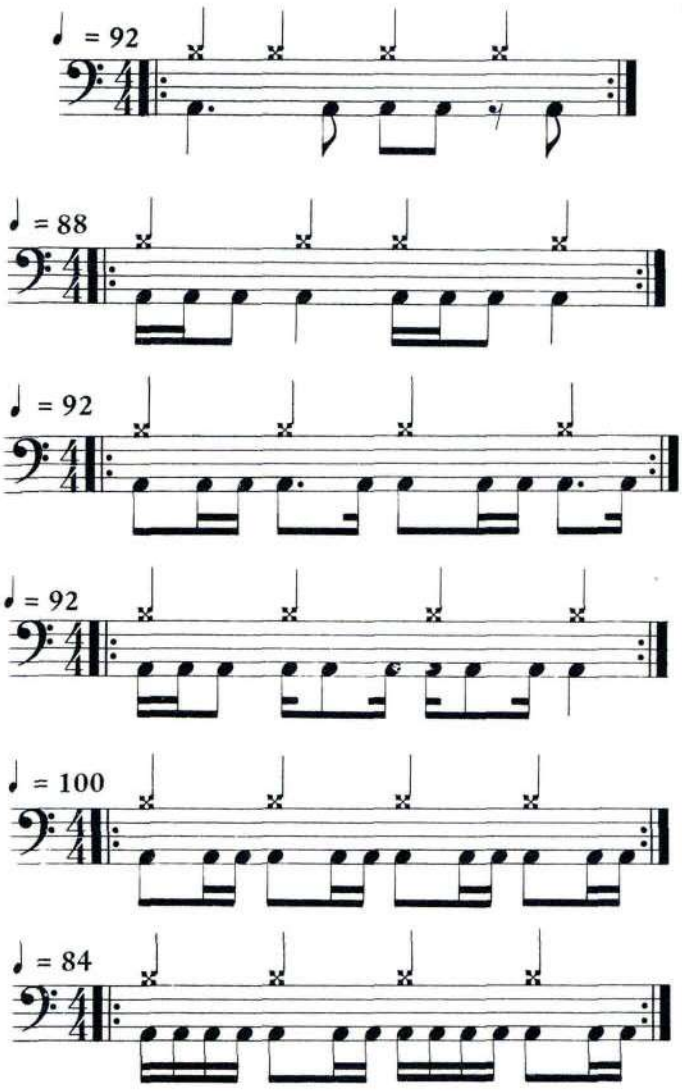
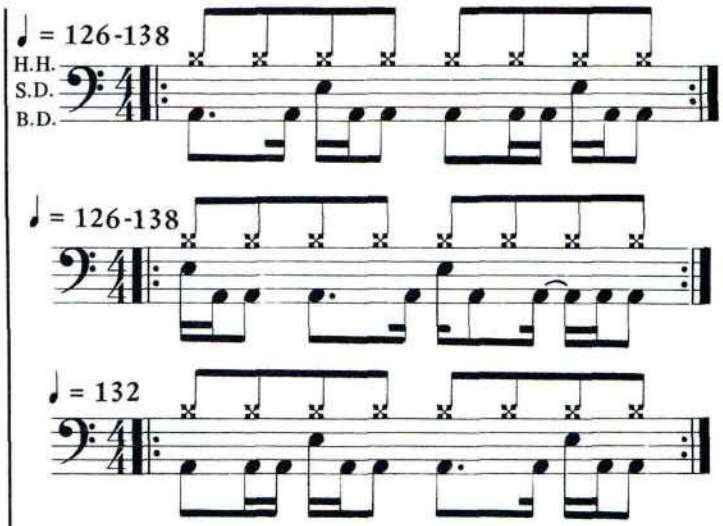
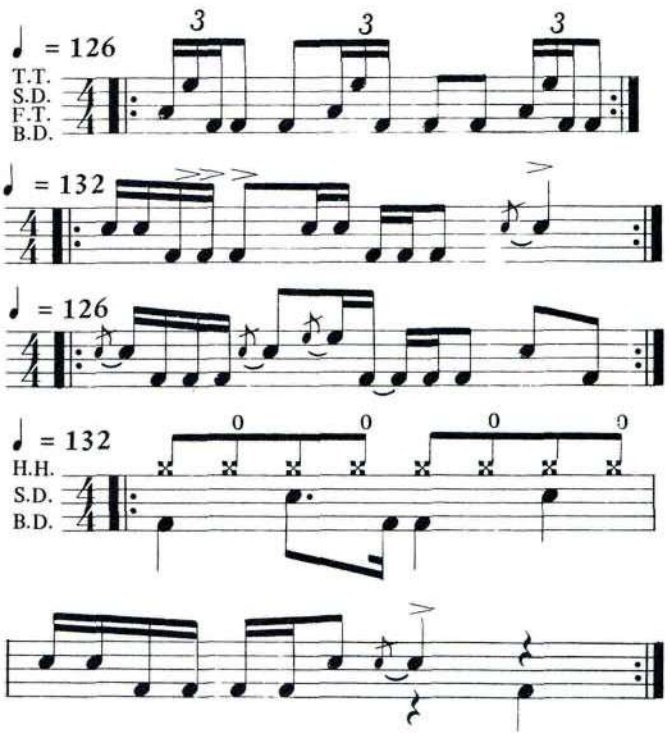
by Maurice Cheetham

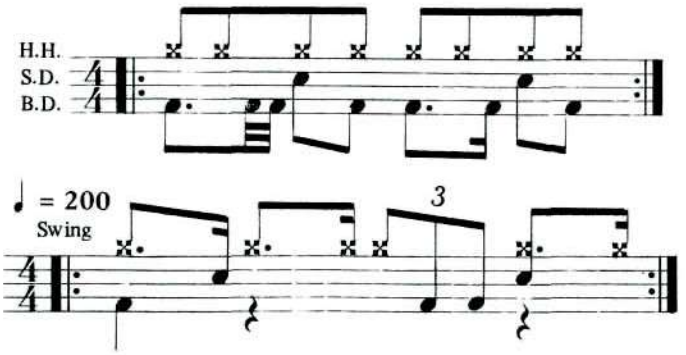
Stretching Your Single Bass Drum Technique — Part 1

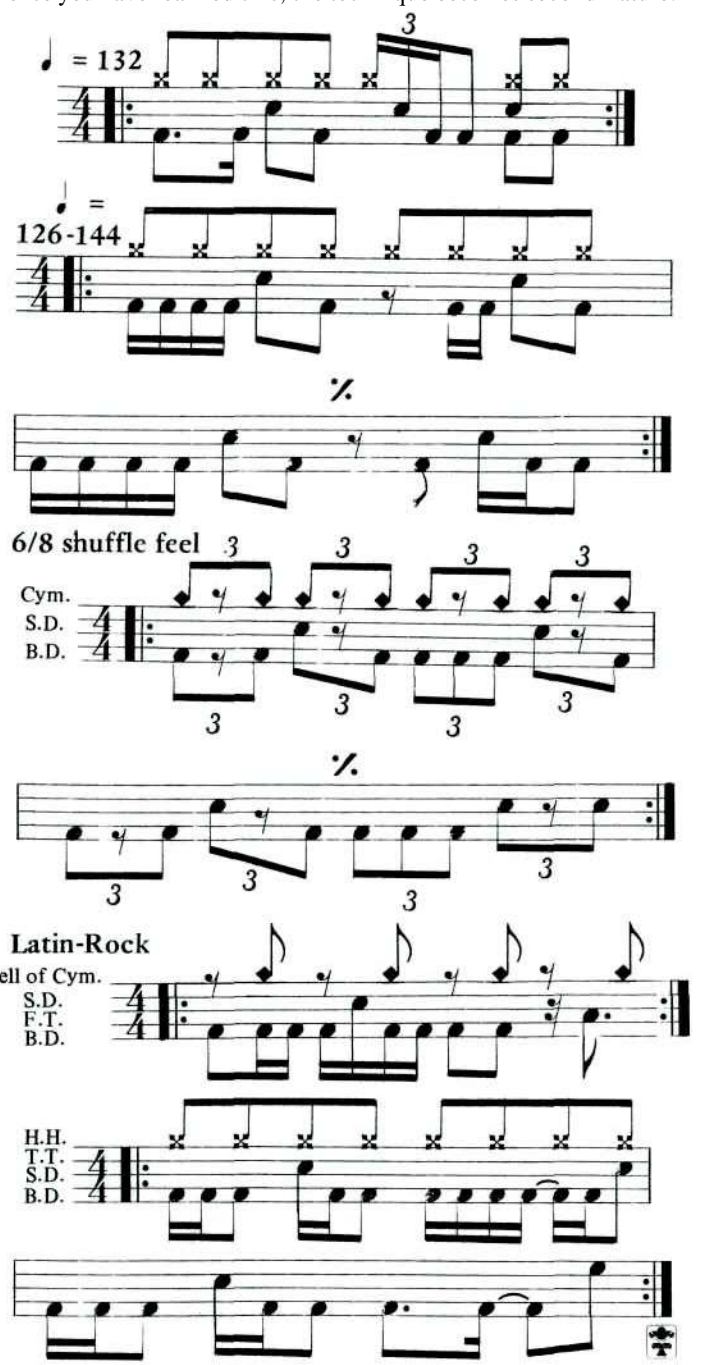
Although the advantages and creative possibilities of using two bass drums are obvious, I maintain that most drummers do not develop their single bass drum technique to its fullest. It is possible to play patterns similar to those of double bass drummers by practicing exercises such as those offered here, and being willing to push oneself beyond some presently accepted barriers. The exercises involve playing a few consecutive notes on the bass drum—used to great effect in fills and rhythms and also in developing the "nerves" of the foot. Tempos at which the exercises should be played are very important. It should also be noted that execution is likely to be easier if the exercises are played with the heel off the pedal.

First of all, we loosen the foot by playing straight quarter notes on the hi-hat, while playing the following bass drum patterns. (Once these are learned they should be used as warm-up exercises.)

The preceding exercises will hopefully have loosened you up and prepared you to play some challenging rhythms. The next few exercises develop the foot as a reaction to the snare drum; in other words, "bouncing" off the previous snare drum beat.

We are all probably familiar with this rock-type fill:

Variations on this can be quite interesting, and some exciting textures can be created, using our adventurous foot. Here are some ideas for you to try:



This technique can be used for providing "ghost" notes before main beats—a style which Phil Collins has mastered wonderfully.

Here are some exercises to work on. In addition, it's important for you to write out patterns to try in your own style of playing, pushing your foot that little bit further, replacing notes that you would usually play on other parts of the kit. It can be done, and once you have realized this, the technique becomes second-nature.



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by Ron Jordan

Assembling Your Own Snare Drum

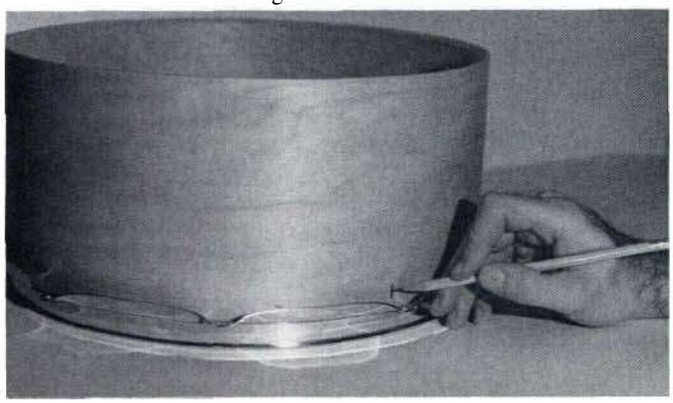
More and more, drummers are facing a need to own several snare drums in order to produce a variety of drum sounds. As a result, interest in custom snare drums is increasing. It is possible to meet these needs and satiate this interest by taking on the relatively simple task of building your own snare drum. There now exists a virtually unlimited range of possibilities with regard to components, dimensions, finishes, and features. With minimal handyman skills and a few tools, a truly personalized snare drum can be created at a reasonable cost—usually far less than a stock model at retail prices. An added reward is the satisfaction derived from building and owning a totally unique instrument.

Selecting the component parts is an enjoyable, yet potentially overwhelming, process. Bare shells are available in a wide variety of sizes, types of wood, and number of plys. Remember that each of those shell variables will affect the ultimate sound of your snare. Do some research by trying out different commercial models, and reading up on what different artists use, before deciding what size and type of shell you should use to obtain the sound you're looking for. A glance through any issue of *Modern Drummer* will reveal several sources of shells. A good starting place is to request brochures from each of these suppliers to familiarize yourself with the choices. The cost of these shells, although somewhat variable, is surprisingly low, and the quality is generally quite high.

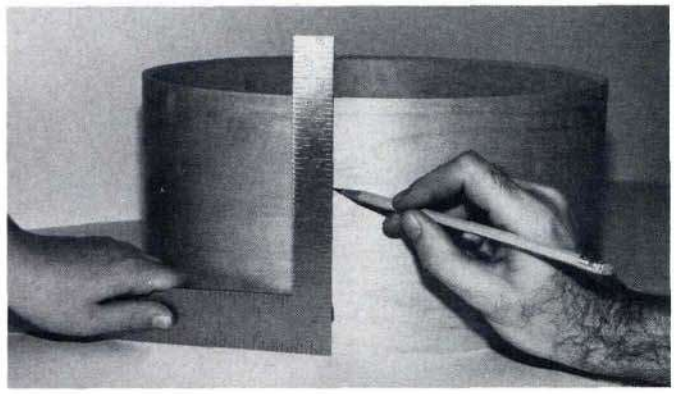
The next decision is that of hardware. There are an infinite number of possible combinations in this area. The only limitations are those of imagination and finances. Purchasing all new component hardware, added to the cost of the shell, will exceed the cost of most new production model drums. If money is no object, then by all means visit your drum dealer and select the lugs, rims, strainers, and rods of your choice. If, however, this proves to be prohibitively expensive, there are other avenues to pursue. Perhaps the simplest and least costly route is that of conversion. Many used "student" model drums are available, usually in good condition and at a reasonable price. The advantage here is that student models typically have first-quality hardware, but the shell may be less than desirable in its material and construction. The easiest way to obtain your "custom" snare is, then, to convert such a drum to the wooden shell of your choice. If the same depth is used, this becomes an even easier job. Other sources of component hardware are used-parts bins, either your own or your dealer's. Sometimes it is possible to obtain an acrylic-shell drum that is intact except for a cracked shell. This is an excellent hardware source, providing that the brand and type meet your needs. Certainly many combinations of these ideas may be explored. Be creative and choose what you want, but be prepared to make compromises if necessary.

The next choice to be exercised is that of finish. Here too, the range of possibilities is staggering. Whether to use a natural finish or to cover with a pearl-type plastic is a totally personal decision. Professional appearance can be obtained with either type of finish. There is some controversy surrounding the acoustic differences between natural and plastic finishes. Once again, I suggest you do some homework to help you in making the choice that will best serve your acoustic goal. If a natural finish is desired, it may be wise to consult a woodworking expert for tips. Even if you have experience with wood finishing, be certain your choice of finish is compatible with the wood type and purpose. Then simply follow the manufacturer's directions. If you wish to cover your drumshell with a plastic, there are also several sources for covering material advertised in most issues *of MD.* Again, write to the suppliers for brochures and samples. A great variety of plastic finishes are available at a reasonable cost, and the directions for application are simple.

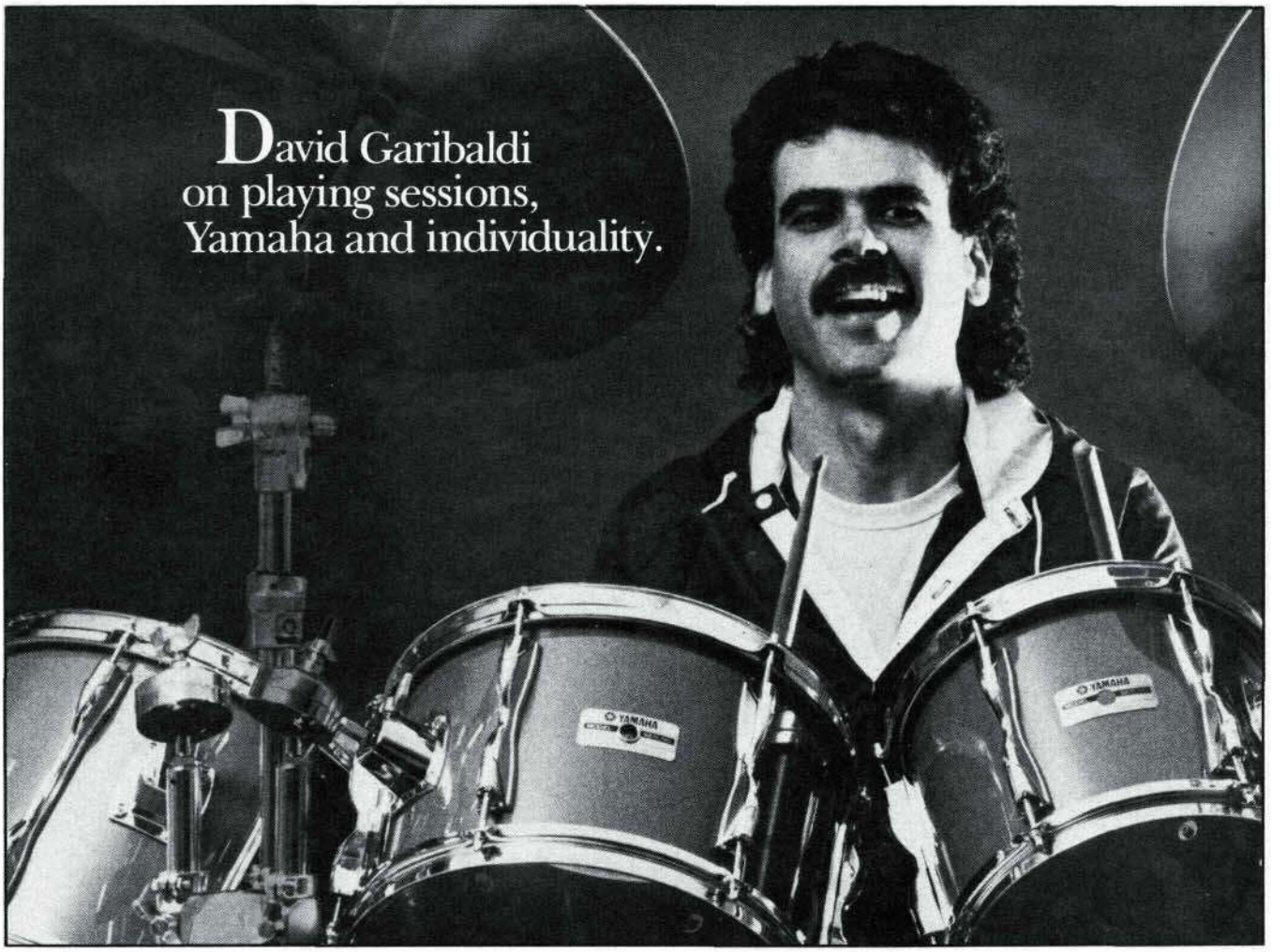
After the component parts are gathered, the real work begins. Before you begin to cut holes in the shell, allow me to offer some words of advice. Slow down. Use caution. Check. Double check. Triple check. The measurements *must* be accurate or you risk ruining the shell. The drilling of all holes can be done with an electric hand drill, but if you are uncomfortable with this a local woodworker's services should be secured. (You may also elect to have the shell drilled to your specifications by the manufacturer, at additional cost.) Prepare for drilling by covering the inside of the shell with wide masking tape to prevent splitting around the holes. Mark the proper spacing of the lugs on the outside of the shell with pencil. This is most easily done by placing the bare shell inside a rim laying flat on a table top. Mark the rod holes around the circumference of the shell at each lug location.



Then use a square to scribe a line through these marks from the top of the shell to the bottom.



If you want snare beds, this is a good time to mark their location and width, using the snare-side rim and snare gates as a guide.



"There's a way to play in the studio and there's a way to play live. When I first moved to L.A. and started doing sessions, guys would tell me that I sounded like a 'live' player. It's in the approach, because with live work you can play a lot busier than you can on tape. You have to get right to the point when you record, especially for the commercial type of recording that goes on out here. They want you to play the right stuff and that doesn't mean playing a lot.

"Tower of Power was built to a large degree on the way that I played. Working with people here, I had to learn to turn that kind of stuff off and play what the *music* required.

"Of course, there're fundamental skills you should have: you should be able to read really well and it's also important to know how to make your instrument sound right. Getting a good recording sound with your instrument is almost more important than reading these days. And you have to spend a long time working on different things so you can get comfortable with your abilities. You have to persevere and stay faithful to what you're doing."

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"You're going to reach a point where you get tired of playing what everybody else can do, and you're going to have to come up with some things of your own if you want longevity. Music is an art form and it's expressive in that you can say whatever you want. You should never feel boxed into a corner where you have to play a certain way just to work. There's a handful of drummers everybody wants to play like, and they are the 'individuals.'"

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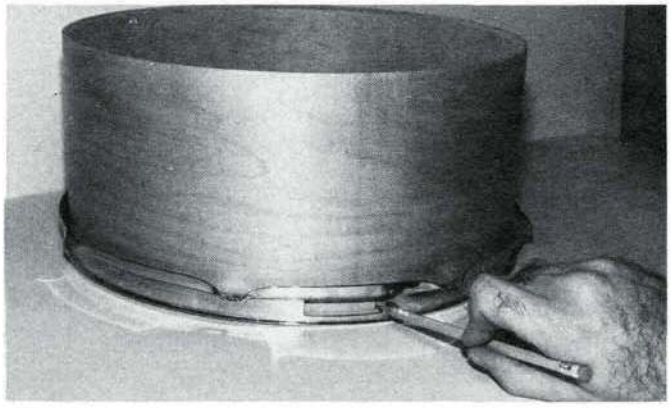
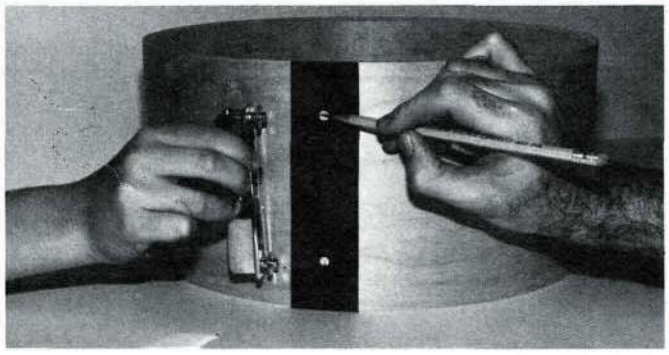
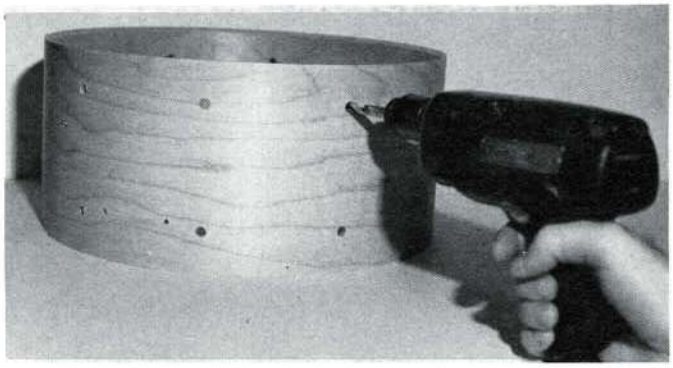


Perhaps the most difficult part of the entire process is determining placement of lug holes along the above-described lines. If you are simply converting a drum, you may use the old shell as a model to mark these holes. If you are dealing with a different depth or different hardware, however, it will be necessary to carefully measure the spacing from the edges of the shell and make a pattern from heavy paper, using the back side of the lugs as a guide.



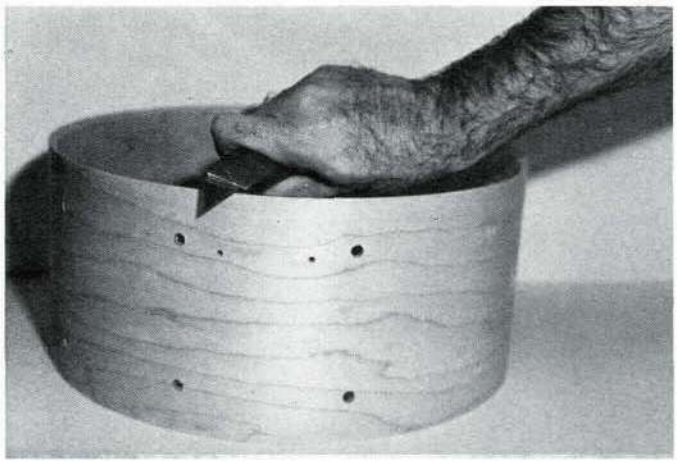
Carefully check all your measurements for accuracy and alignment. Then select the correct size bit for your lugs and drill the holes.



Next you will need to determine the location of the snare mechanism and drill holes for its attachment. Examine another drum with a similar strainer as a guide for placement. Then mark and check carefully. While it may seem obvious, make sure the two sides of the strainer are located directly opposite each other and correspond with the placement of the snare bed markings. This can be slightly confusing when working with a bare shell, and can be disastrous if the holes are drilled in the wrong location. Select the correct size bit and drill the holes for the strainer.

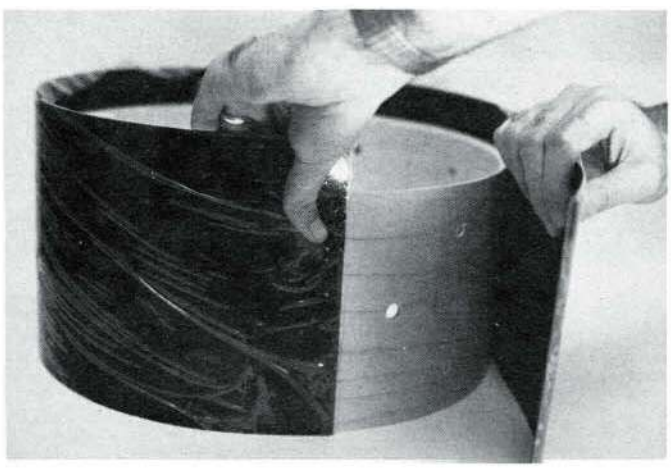
The number and location of the air vent holes may now be chosen and drilled. While one hole is standard, some people feel that the drum's response will be quicker with more than one vent. There have also been some claims for greater projection with additional venting. The size of the vent holes is your option, but may be gov-

erned in part by the availability of metal eyelets with which to finish them. Local hardware stores may stock an appropriate eyelet, but if this is not the case, they may be obtained from the suppliers of either the shells or the covering material. Then, using the drum of your choice as a model, cut the snare beds by cautiously using a sharp utility knife or file. Again, be cautious and work slowly. You should definitely have a model to work from when creating snare beds. If possible, a wooden shell that you can compare yours to during the operation is best. Failing that, measurements carefully taken from a drum examined at your local music store should give you a specific width and depth to work toward. Uniformity is easier when using a file and sandpaper. Snare beds need not be deep to serve their purpose, and may be entirely deleted if you so choose.



There has been no mention of placement of internal muffling devices, because my preference is to delete them in favor of external methods. If, however, you choose to include an internal muffler, simply determine the location by using a similarly equipped drum as a model. Likewise, any experimental modifications to the shell should be completed at this point.

After all holes are drilled and the snare beds cut, it is time to apply the finish. If you have chosen a natural finish, the only preparation necessary is to remove any markings that may remain on the exterior of the shell. Raw shells are typically sanded quite well, but a fine, finish sanding may be desired. As mentioned previously, it is important to follow the finish manufacturer's directions. This also holds true if a plastic covering is used. Sealing the interior of the shell with some type of varnish, shellac, or lacquer is recommended. This will seal out moisture and add to the resonance of the drum. An epoxy adhesive should be used to secure the metal vent eyelets in place. As always, exercise care and attention to detail in the finishing process to ensure a professional appearance.



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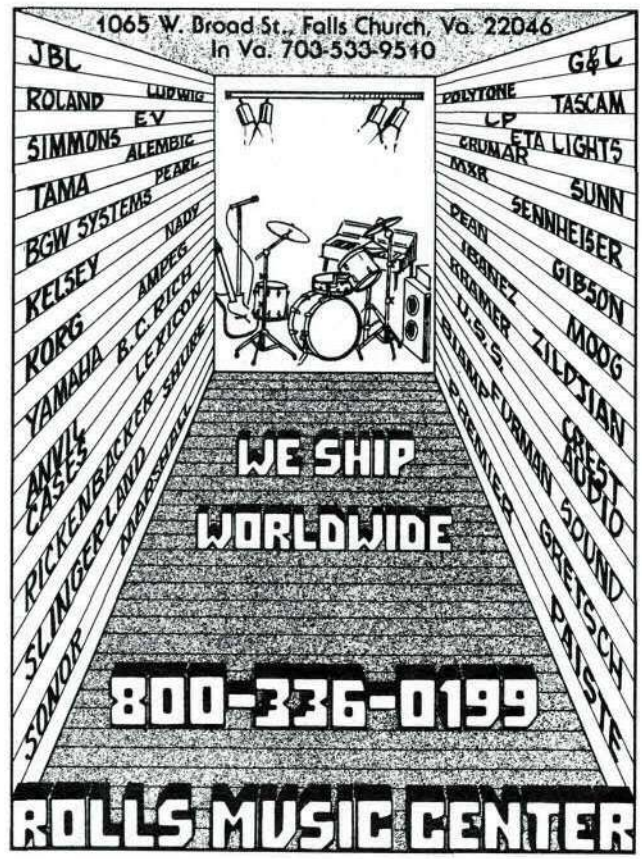

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Pictured at a recent MI graduation are (l to r) BIT instructor, Tim Bogert, BIT graduate Mark VonZeck, PIT instructor Steve Houghton, GIT instructor Tommy Tedesco, BIT Graduate Ron Corpuz, GIT graduate Bart Samolis, GIT instructor Howard Roberts, (front row l to r) PIT graduates Paul Matcott and Takashi Numazawa and GIT graduate Kirk Smart.

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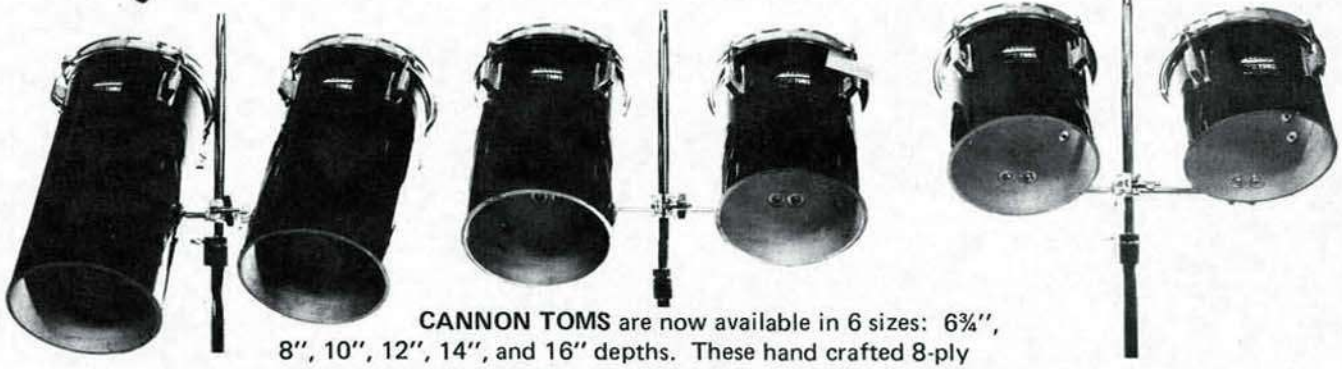

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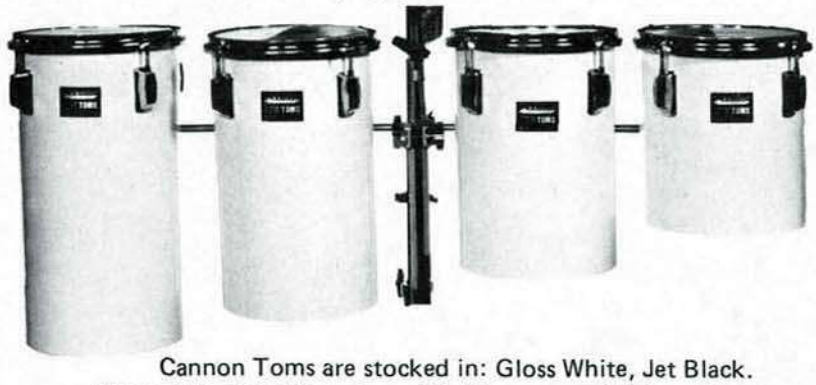

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Bevan continued from page 25
cause I felt cut off from them. I could hardly see or hear the people. We only did one tour after that. That was two-and-a-half years ago. It was the last tour we did, and will probably remain the last tour for reasons I spoke about before.

RS: What about the time spent in the studio recording ELO albums? What kind of work technique did you have in formulating drum parts for Jeff Lynne's songs? Did you have the freedom to do pretty much what you thought proper and right?

BB: No, not really. That was very, very frustrating. I mean, I never enjoyed making ELO albums that much, because there wasn't enough scope for me to put stuff in. Jeff would always want the basic structure of the song done first: drums, bass and maybe some rough keyboards. I never knew where the vocals would come in. It was very hard to put in breaks and things. We never recorded live. There were so many things going onto the tracks—choirs, orchestral parts, more keyboards, more orchestral parts. It would have sounded pretty silly if I played busy. It would have sounded terrible, as a matter of fact. So it was better to keep the drums simple. It was very frustrating.

RS: Were you responsible for the sound of your drums?

BB: Well, to an extent, yes. The first few days in the studio were usually spent working on the drum sound and getting it right. I'd have to leave the technical parts to the engineer and to Jeff as well. But I'd keep on playing for a half hour or so, and then I'd listen back and say, "Well, the bass drum could be a bit brighter here, or the snare could have more depth." We'd do that until we got the sound we wanted and everyone was happy with it.

RS: Did you ever play to a click track in the studio?

BB: Yeah, all the time with ELO. That drove me crazy. You start worrying about the bloody click track rather than the music and the feel of the song.

RS: It sounded to me as if there was a lot of double-tracking going on with the drums. In fact, I might have even read that somewhere. Was there?

BB: Yes, there was, and again it made for keeping things simple. See, you can only successfully double-track drums on single beats. You double-track a roll, and it simply doesn't come out right. It sounds like someone falling down the stairs or something. I think just about everything on *Out Of The Blue* and *Discovery* was double-tracked—every snare drum beat and every tom-tom beat. It meant going back in and playing everything stroke for stroke exactly the way I played before. That took some doing, as you can imagine.

RS: Do you use the same kit in the studio as you do on stage?

BB: No, I don't. I've got a kit that I use in the studio and one that I use when I play live. I always use a much smaller bass drum in the studio because it's much easier to control, and I get a punchier sound with an 18" bass drum than a 26" bass, which is what I used on stage. I always take a half dozen snare drums with me in the studio, and I always use a wooden-shell snare drum. Again, I find it easier to control, especially in terms of rattles and stuff which can ruin a take. And I've always used Slingerland drums, although I've always had a preference for Rogers foot pedals. Since I'm so heavy footed, I tend to break other brands of pedals, or else I bend them up. I have my own drumsticks constructed by Slingerland as well: double-ended ones, with no acorn on them. I tend to break regular sticks.

RS: Can you recall your very first kit? Was it a Slingerland?

BB: The very first kit I ever owned was made by a company called Broadway. Few people have probably ever heard of it. But after my Broadway kit, I got a set of Ludwig drums. Finally, in 1969, I bought my first Slingerland kit. It was when I was in America. I bought it at Manny's in Manhattan, as a matter of fact.

RS: What track on an ELO album would you consider a fine example of your drum style and drum playing?

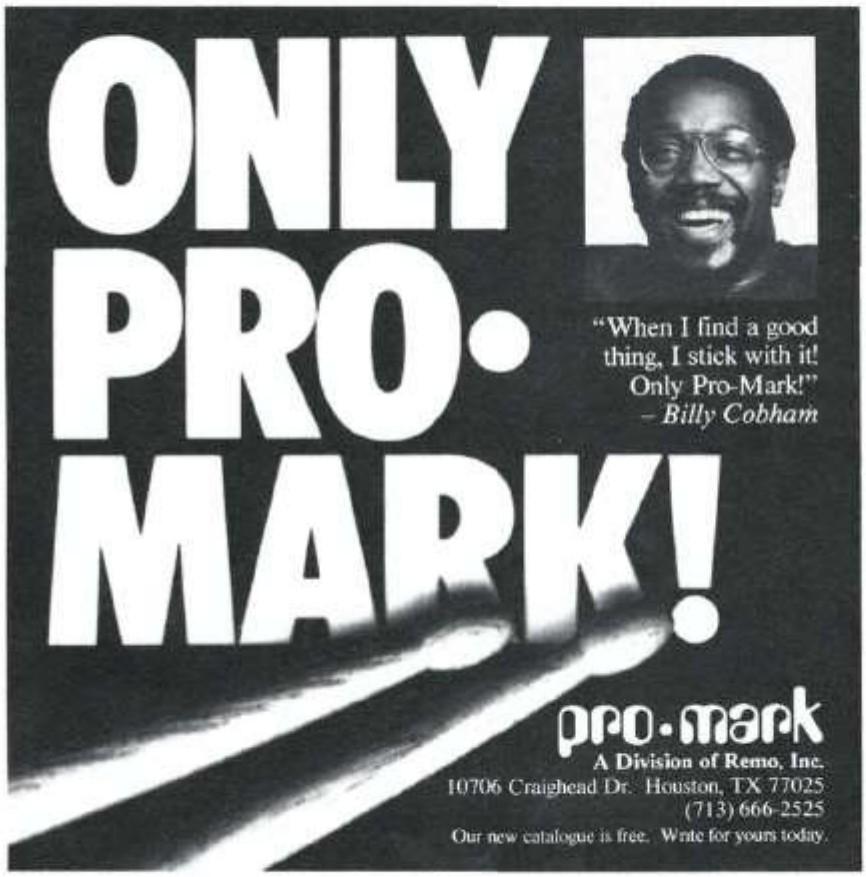
BB: It would probably be on an early album. I think "Fire On High" might be good, although I haven't played it for years. It's on the album, *Face The Music,* I believe. It's the instrumental that begins the album. I think that track is quite good. I didn't have many restrictions on that, and it does sort of have a heavy riff running through it. The song had a lot of nice gaps in it where I could do some fills and things.

RS: From the research I've done, it seems as if there was one time in your life that you believed one could learn virtually any instrument, but with drums it had to come naturally. In other words, drummers are born, not made. Do you still believe that?

BB: I think so, yeah. Drummers are definitely a different breed; they're different from all other musicians. I mean, I don't even have the first notion about music theory. Whenever I'm playing my drums and someone in the band says something like, "I think I have to change the E to an A," I wind up saying, "What? What are you talking about?" Everyone else can talk music, but generally drummers can't, unless, of course, they play another instrument, which I don't. But drummers, I think, must have a natural sense of rhythm. I know people who can't even clap in time. It's really amazing. If you don't have a natural rhythm, a natural sense of time, it would be pretty stupid to try to learn how to play the drums.

RS: How did you begin playing drums?

BB: My father was a drummer, actually, but he died when I was ten years old. So I really can't consider him an influence or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anything. But I got involved in a school band and it felt right sitting behind a drumkit. I felt like I belonged there. I didn't take lessons. I don't think lessons are a particularly good thing.

RS: And why's that?

BB: It's probably okay if you just want to read the dots and do sessions. But if you want to go out and really express yourself and stamp your own sort of style on a piece of music, I think lessons could very well hold you back. I could be wrong, of course. But I think if you stayed away from lessons it would probably be best.

RS: How much of a rapport do you usually try to maintain with the bass player you're performing with?

BB: A lot. I've always looked for a strong relationship with the bass player. And now with Black Sabbath, it's actually quite easy to accomplish, because Geezer Butler is such a great bass player and all-around musician.

RS: You've mentioned John Bonham, among other great rock drummers, as having been from your hometown of Birmingham. Was Bonham a close friend of yours?

BB: Yes, he was. I thought John was the greatest rock 'n' roll drummer ever. The power the man had was quite extraordinary.

RS: A lot of your American fans probably don't know that you wrote a book—*The Electric Light Orchestra Story*—a couple of years ago, mostly because it was never published in the States. How did the idea to write the book come about?

BB: Towards the end of the '70s, unlike the earlier part of the decade, Electric Light Orchestra got real laid back and didn't do much—one album every 18 months, and the occasional tour. So I found myself with a lot of time. And since I've always enjoyed writing, I've always kept diaries and have done a few record reviews and things like that for newspapers mostly in England, someone suggested that I do a book. Well, it seemed like the natural thing to do. We had just finished that awful thing we did with Olivia Newton-John, *Xanadu.* Don't get me wrong. *She* wasn't awful; she's great. But the project itself just didn't quite make it, if you know what I mean. So I certainly had the time to do the book. I suppose it could have been more detailed and I could have laid more things on the line. But it was basically a fun project. It's a "fanzine" type of book—nothing really heavy, just fun reading.

RS: In the prologue of the book, you mention that being in the music business as long as you have, you've changed considerably. How have you changed both as a person and as a drummer?

BB: What I wrote, I'm afraid, might have been an over-exaggeration, now that I think of it. It was just a general growing up that I was referring to. That, plus things like being able to afford nice things that in the past, before the success of ELO, I simply couldn't. And I meant a growing confidence with people and life in general, I suppose.

As for drumming, I don't think I've matured quite enough, actually. When I started out playing drums, I was thought of as being really hot. And then in the '70s I slowed down quite a bit. I'd like to get that reputation back. I mean, I'm enjoying my drums and playing them more now than I've done for many years, which at my age is an exciting thing to say. And I think because of that, I'm playing better than ever. The album title of the Sabbath record, *Born Again,* really does a good job of describing me. We're doing Black Sabbath music, and Black Sabbath is the name of the band, but with me and Ian in the band, it's really like a new group, isn't it? Even when we play Black Sabbath's old material in concert, it's like brand new stuff to me.

I like to tell myself that I'm finally out of the rut and the stagnant period I sort of got myself into in the '70s, from a drumming point of view. I like to think that my best years as a drummer are still to come.

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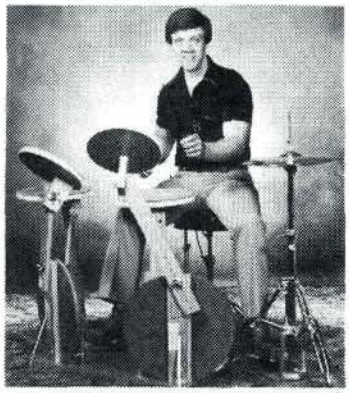

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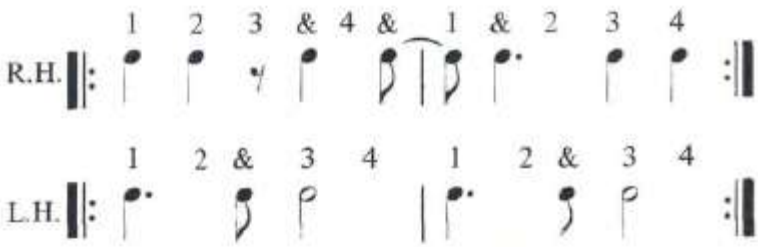
Chord Changes

Music is made up of four basic elements: rhythm, harmony, melody, and sound color or timbre. When you sit down behind your drumset and play in a group you are a musician, and how well you understand, react and create with these elements determines whether or not you are as good a musician as you could be. Very often the drummer is handed the same lead sheet the composer gives everyone else, instead of a special drum chart. You must be able to decipher and interpret as much of the information as possible to successfully perform your role in the group.

The goal of this article is to give you an initial awareness of the structure or framework of music, and illustrate how this knowledge will influence your drumming. We will first deal with three important notes in a scale: (1) the *1st* degree (or *root),* (2) the *3rd,* and (3) the *7th.* Notice the 1st is also called the *root.* The 3rd and 7th are called *guide tones.*

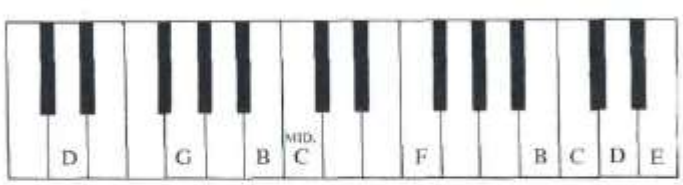
By the end of this article you will be able to play basic chord changes, but first, play something you can already do. Play this rhythm:



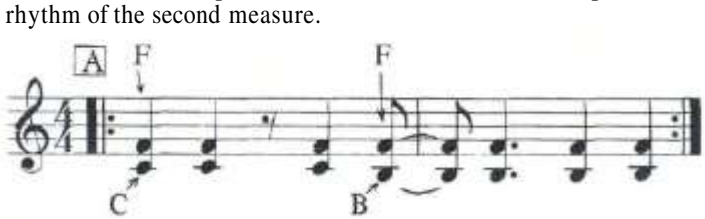
(Latin straight 8th time feel)

Play each hand separately at first, then together. Start slowly, until you can groove perfectly at 120mm.

Now, go to whatever keyboard is available to you and find middle C. One half step below C is B, and a perfect 4th up from C is F.



Play the C and F together, in the right-hand rhythm from figure 1 (above), until you reach the last 8th note of the first measure. On the last 8th note, keep the F but shift the C to B, and complete the rhythm of the second measure.



Congratulations! You have just made your first chord changes. What you are playing are the *guide tones* (3rd and 7th degrees of the scale) for D-7 and G7.

The symbols "D-7" and "G7" are examples of the shorthand way that harmonic information is written down on paper. It is important to learn about these symbols, as they tell us the *harmonic color,* or chord sound, of the music. Let's break down the two chords we're using—D-7 and G7.

1. The symbol "D" means that you play a D note. Easy.
2. The symbol "-" means that you go a *minor* third above D, which is F natural.
3. The symbol "7" means that you play the *minor* seventh above D, which is C natural. Note: When you see a "7" it is always assumed that you play the minor 7th, unless it specifically says "maj7" (major seventh). For example, a Dmaj7 would be D, F andC*.

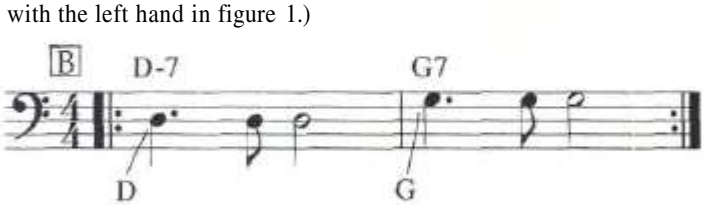
Don't be confused; it's easier than it sounds. Let's try the G7:

1. The "G" means that you play G. Easy again, right?
2. Since you don't see a "-" symbol, you play the *major* third above G, which is B.
3. What does the "7" tell you? You play the seventh above G, or F. Remember, you always assume the 7th is minor, unless you are told differently.

So, to review: The notes you play for a D-7 are D, F, and C. The notes you play for a G7 are G, B, and F. What note do these two chords have in common? If you said anything besides F, you'd better check again. When you played the chord changes earlier, the only note that moved was the C to the B.

Practice playing these guide tones (C&F and B&F) at different places on your keyboard to see how the timbre and sound change. You want to train your ear to catch these sounds when the other players make them, so that you hear, and directly relate your drumming to, what is being played at that instant. For instance, guide tones being played by trumpets in a high range will sound different from guide tones played by a guitar or organ.

So far, you have played just the guide tones. Next, we'll concentrate on the root. Go to the keyboard again, and play figure B (below) with the left hand, until it grooves perfectly with the metronome at 120mm. (This is the same rhythm pattern you played with the left hand in figure 1.)



Generally, it is best to play the root in the bass. This is a very common bass pattern. As a drummer, you will want to develop a large selection of ideas to complement and augment this, and any other figure the bass might play. Hearing and understanding the bass movement will help you a great deal in becoming a better listening, and therefore more *musical,* drummer.

Now that you can play figure B, add the guide tones you played in figure A. This is great for your coordination, and it is essential

by Bill Molenhof

practice for hearing two parts played together. When you feel confident with that, try to play the same rhythm pattern in as many keys as possible. To help you do this, remember:

1. The root is spelled out for you. Play it in the bass, with the left hand.
2. The third is assumed to be major, unless made minor by a "-" symbol.
3. The seventh is minor in all the examples presented here. (It is always assumed to be minor unless shown as "maj7.")
4. Keep the common tone, and move the other guide tone down one half step. Try playing these examples:

a. C-7 (g.t. E&B) to F7 (g.t. A&E)
b. F-7 (g.t. A&E) to B7 (g.t. D&A)
c. B-7 (g.t. D&A) to E7 (g.t. G&D)
d. E-7 (g.t. G&D) to A7 (g.t. C&G), etc.

The best way to learn something is to apply it by playing with other people. At your next band practice, try these exercises with your friends. Ideally, you should be able to play our exercise pattern in all 12 keys. If you can't, don't despair. If you can play correctly in at least three keys at this time, you have the right idea.

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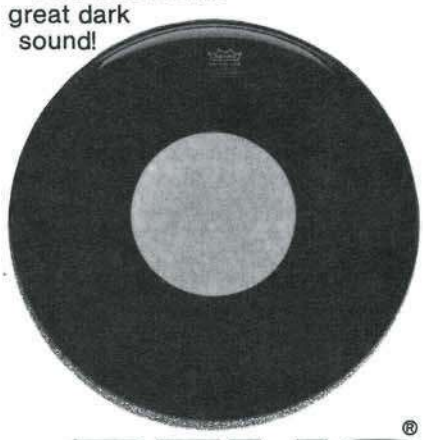

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by Rick Van Horn

Warren White: Drummer On Ice

Working for an ice show with the prestige—not to mention the gruel ing touring schedule—of the Ice Capades, requires talent, versatility, and a substantial amount of stamina. For 18 months, Warren White demonstrated all of those qualities as the drummer with the East Coast Company of that famous ice extravaganza. In February of '84, he left the show, returning to his hometown of Dallas to free-lance and teach. But a few weeks before leaving, he spoke with us about the highly specialized skills and unique playing situations involved with drumming for the Ice Capades.

RVH: How long have you been with the Ice Capades?

WW: I started in August of '82. I did a nine-month tour last year, and I started this tour in August of '83. It will go on till the end of April, '84.

RVH: The most interesting aspect of your job, to me, is that you're working with live musicians and taped accompaniment at the same time. Why is that system used?

WW: The Ice Capades has been around for 40 years or so, and they used to have a whole string section, a 20-piece band, lead male and female vocalists, and a couple of backup singers, just like a major production show in Las Vegas. When things got more sophisticated in the show as far as production numbers and things like that are concerned, it was better for the sake of consistency to start putting some things on tape. Also, they take this same production all over the country for three years, and in some of the small cities they were sometimes unable to get 12 string players who could cut the gig with professional quality. Of course, the bottom line is that they're saving money by putting the strings and vocals on tape.

RVH: Given all those advantages, why not put the whole thing on tape?

WW: It's a different feeling when you have a combination of tape and live band. You have some live energy, and there's room for things to change somewhat. You have some numbers, like the comedy numbers, that are completely live, because they can't be timed out to a click track. The music has to follow the act, rather than the other way around. Shows that are all on tape always sound funny to me; they don't come off. With the combination of the live band and the tape, you do get at least some live things happening. It would be a pretty big production to take twelve strings and eight singers, and try to reproduce everything the same all the time, which I think is what they're looking for. To involve all those full-time employees . . . When it comes down to it, it's the money thing.

RVH: From what I could tell, Dorothy Hamill's numbers were totally taped. I would think that if you're looking for consistency, for the performer's sake, that would be the way to go.

WW: But to me, those numbers really drag. They don't have any punch to them. Plus, the systems they're run through generally aren't adequate to fill the buildings we usually play. When we go to a city like Victoria, BC, and it's a smaller place, then the totally taped stuff sounds fine. But that doesn't happen when you have these big arenas that are real tall. Plus, there's a thing with the union. The show could probably all be put on tape, except for certain things, but the union wants to keep people working. In each city there's a minimum established. In Nassau, Long Island, there's a minimum of 18 players who must be hired. At the Meadowlands in New Jersey, it was 12. So the book is set up where it can work with 12 or 18 or whatever. If we add more players, there'll be a bari sax, a flute, a piccolo, guitar, and two percussionists instead of just the one timpanist—maybe a mallet person as well. That keeps people working, which is good for the locals, and it's good for the Ice Capades, too.

RVH: The musicians who travel with the show are the conductor, the assistant conductor/pianist, and you. I assume all the other live musicians are hired just for each individual engagement from the union local.

WW: Right.

RVH: Why not travel with your own bass player? It seems like the rhythm section would be more complete that way.

WW: I think they should. One of the other Ice Capades companies uses its own bass player, because it plays in smaller cities and runs the risk of not being able to get somebody who can cut the gig reading the book. But in most of the big cities, there are enough bass players available for the contractor to get someone who can do a good job. But it's still not the same as having somebody there who can really lock in with you.

RVH: You told me earlier that you had worked with two different conductors who had two different ways of thinking about bass players.

WW: I did a tour last year with the West Company of Ice Capades. I had the summer months off, then we had this East Company tour starting the last day of August '83. Last year, the conductor and I wanted the bass player on the click track with us all the time. The guy I'm working with this year says he'd rather have the bass player strictly watching him all the time, since, in his experience, the bass players were missing cues because they wouldn't watch him. Instead, they were listening to the click. The fact is, in this show, if you're playing with the click, you don't need to watch the conductor.

The conductor's primary responsibility in this show is to count the band in at the beginning of each tune, and give any other cues that might be necessary. Those would include cuts, holds, or places where the tape plays alone for a few bars. Our conductor is also the one who is actually controlling the tape, starting and stopping it at the appropriate points in the show. But what makes our conductor's job very different from that of a Broadway pit conductor or a symphony conductor, is that our conductor is not really responsible for the tempos. Our tempos are first established by the click track, and from then on, it's strictly up to the drummer. I don't care what the conductor does, 75% of the musicians are going to go where the drummer puts it, rather than where the conductor puts it. So when we get into rubato passages—or even passages that stay in tempo but don't feature the rhythm section—sometimes things do get a little "off" of the click. To help out in this situation, I'll sometimes play quarter notes very lightly on my hi-hat—just for the band to hear—in order to sync everything back up. That's

the *drummer's* main job on this show: to synchronize the tape and the live band.

RVH: Can you elaborate a little on playing with the click track?

WW: When you're recording, the click is there to establish one of two things. On a jingle, it's to make everything fit within a certain amount of time. On a record, it's to maintain a perfect tempo for overdubs and things like that. In my situation, the click is there mainly to synchronize the tape and the band, so it's a little different. I try to play along with it as if I were doing a record, but doing so many shows a week for nine months, you're obviously not going to nail everything every time.

RVH: As you say, in a studio, with a click track to establish tempo, that tempo is consistent. But yours is a show situation, with starts, stops, ups and downs. Your click must accelerate and decelerate at different points.

WW: There might be 32 bars at the same tempo, then it gets faster, then goes to half-time, etc. There are all kinds of changes in there, and that's the purpose of the click in our case—for those things to be the same every night. One thing that makes it difficult is that sometimes there are mistakes that haven't been taken off the recordings we're playing with. It sounds like someone had to get them done in a certain number of hours. We have to change the way *we* play certain things in order to cover the mistakes on the prerecordings, which is really lame. But when we get in this situation, we just do what we've got to do to cover the gig.

When you're playing with a click track, there are a lot of different places you can play. You can lay back on it, you can play right on it, or you can play on top. What I do is just try to play right on it all the time. Depending on who's playing bass, sometimes things feel real good and sometimes they don't. To me, they should have the lead trumpet player and the bass on the click, because it's really the lead trumpet player and the drummer, along with the bass player, who set the time up for the entire band on this type of thing. The horn players are not on the click, and sometimes they can draw you off, so you really have to be strong and concentrate. A lot of times, since I know the music well enough, I don't even listen to what they're doing. I really just try to nail everything and make them go with me.

RVH: What about the physical problem of your being in front of the horn section? How well can they hear you?

WW: It does create a different problem, with me up near the front, but that's a concession that has to be made in order for me to see the ice.

RVH: Something that you do that isn't seen much anymore is vaudeville or burlesque-style drumming when you work with the comic skaters. You use drums to underscore the sight gags, in addition to playing all the comic sound effects. How much work is involved with that, in terms of rehearsal and preparation?

WW: I get with the comedians a week to ten days before the opening of the tour. They will let me know what they want me to do. In the case of the people I'm working with now, they've been doing that same act for 20 years, so they know exactly what they want. I was able to look at a videotape of them doing this act with another drummer, and make notes on what comes where. Not being musicians, it's hard for them to explain, "We want you to play this ratchet here for three beats . . . we want you to play cowbell here, or siren ..." Sometimes they don't know the names of things. Instead of "siren," they'll say "that whistle that goes 'wheeeEEEEE.' " They've been doing it long enough and have worked with enough drummers to be able to explain what they want. They'll say, "Can you do that a littler earlier" or "a little later," and it just comes together. The only way to do it all is to memorize it, and the hardest thing is to get the sequence of what I have to pick up, what I have to put down, what I have to have in my mouth here, and what type of mallet or stick I need. There are certain parts where I play the slide whistle first, and I've got to have a triangle beater in my right hand and a stick in my left hand to play the wood block. I might have to hold the slide whistle in my mouth for 20 seconds, because

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that's coming right up and there's not enough time to put it down. On top of that, I must watch the comics at all times. It probably looks funny to most people who come in, because instead of the drummer being toward the back of the band, like in a typical show band setup, I'm usually in the front, to one side. I have to be where I can see the ice. Going from arena to arena, the band will be set up differently. I might be up in the stands—they build a bandstand up there. I might be behind a curtain, or angled in such a way that I can't see what's going on at the very front of the ice. In that case, they set up a little video monitor for me, so I can watch the show on the screen. The main thing is being able to see the comedians in order to play along with their timing.

RVH: How much rehearsal time do you have to put a totally new show together before a tour starts?

WW: The skaters, staff and crew are there for about six weeks, putting their parts together. I come in for about the last nine or ten days before it starts. We'll have a couple of dress rehearsals, and then opening night.

RVH: There is a great deal of original music in the show, as well as adaptations and special arrangements of pop tunes. How much time do you devote to working with the music alone, versus the time working with the comics where eye contact is involved?

WW: The main thing I did during the rehearsal time was learn the comedy things, because I can read the music, but the comedy things have to be memorized. I put much more time into that.

RVH: When the show's composer gives you new material, how much of the drum part is actually charted for you?

WW: It depends. There are three composers who write for the Ice Capades. Consequently, there are three different ways of writing drum parts. When I listen to a certain thing, I know that it is this writer's tune or that writer's tune, because I know how they write things. I just don't think there are many writers who know how to write a good drum part, so you have to sit down and figure out what the composer really wants. When it comes to those things that are strictly a legit-type snare part, you play that verbatim. But on some of the rock things, if you played what they wrote, note for note, it would sound so dumb that it would just be funny. So what you have to do is just listen a lot, and figure out what's happening in the tune. A lot of what they write will actually work, but after you've done it a couple of times, you can go to the writer and say, "Well, this sounds okay, but what about if I do this . . . "and play something else. Then the writer will usually say, "Yeah, that sounds better. Do that." They're only there for the first couple of rehearsals, and we get a lot of the kinks worked out there. As long as what I'm playing sounds right for the music and sounds right to me, it's pretty much left like that.

RVH: Does what you play evolve as you go out on the road?

WW: I think so. You memorize the show after about a month of doing it, and what you play will change. You have to listen a lot to the band and to what's happening on the tape to make sure that you don't play too much, and you don't take it too far out. Sometimes if you do something that might be taking it a little bit to the edge, the conductor will say something. But when you're reading that chart, you really *have* to doctor the drum parts up sometimes, and what you do is really left to your discretion. That's one of the things about this gig: I don't think you *could* play the show the same way every time and keep your sanity. Even the musicians who do shows on Broadway, where the situation is stricter, can change things a little bit within certain guidelines.

RVH: How much input do the artists have? I suppose that a solo artist who wants a particular piece of music could go to the conductor and ask for a funk piece, a jazz piece, a march or whatever. But do artists ever come to you during the run of the show and ask for a little more punch, more energy, or anything of that nature?

WW: Not really. I don't think working with skaters is the same as working with singers or dancers. Of course, it varies from performer to performer, but I don't think they work as closely with the music as perhaps they should. I think skaters think about things differently. They look for certain "landmarks" in the music that indicate "This is where I'm supposed to do this particular technique," and "This is where I'm supposed to pick the girl up" and things like that.

RVH: It's not note-by-note choreography, then?

WW: No, because often they're in different places. There are certain points in some peoples' acts where I can tell that they're really behind the music today or in front of it. It's not like working with dancers, where everything has to be nailed right on the money. And you have to understand that the background of some of the people in the show has been strictly skating. It's a different background than what a musician or a dancer has. Whereas you might have been performing more or less all your life, they've been skating and training all their lives—more of an athletic thing than an aesthetic or artistic one. Of course, in figure skating there are certain moves and routines, but it's not the precision required of a dancer.

RVH: How much time do you have in each city to rehearse with the local musicians?

WW: There'll be a 7:30 show on opening night, and the rehearsal for the orchestra is usually from 1:00 to 3:00 that afternoon. If we run into problems, it can run a little longer. But all it takes is a drummer who really knows the show, clearly written parts, and good musicians who can read and pay attention to what's going on. It's really not that difficult for players who can read. We run into problems in some places. In some of the smaller cities, the musicians aren't that experienced with show work, and may only play one gig a month. That's when I have to realize the situation and do a little more to help out. I try to lay things out really simple, so it's real easy for them to hear it. If we're playing in Dallas, San Francisco, or New York, I can go in the first night and know that there'll be no problems. I can play a lick here that might be busier or go across the bar lines on fills, and it's no problem. But if I get with musicians who aren't very experienced, I have to be very simplistic about setting things up. Sometimes in that situation the whole week's really a drag and I can't wait to get to the next city, but what can you do?

RVH: Is the conductor responsible for contracting the extra musicians?

WW: No, the contractor is local in each area. Many of the contractors have been doing it for several years for Ice Capades. The head office takes care of that. They send a letter telling the contractor what the dates will be, and how many players are needed on what instruments. The musicians will be there when we get there. Each week the conductor files a report, which might say that the bass player was weak in the area of reading, or the trumpet player

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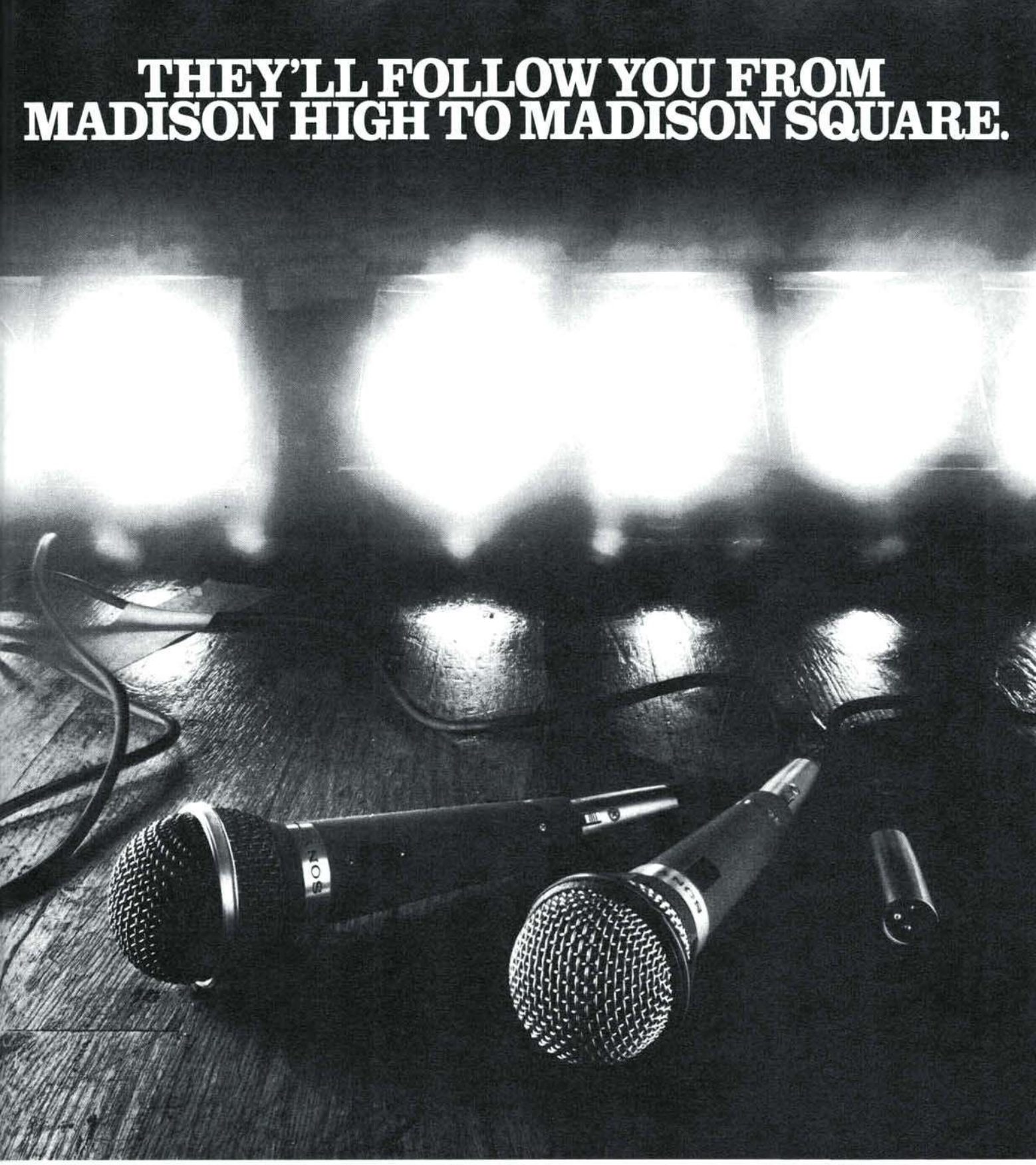

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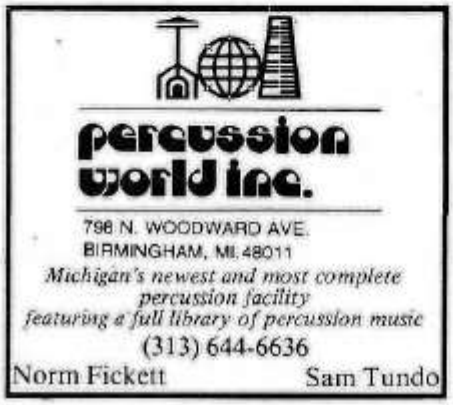

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was late, or something like that. If somebody is really a problem, the conductor will say, "I never want to see so-and-so on the band again." We have had instances where a local player was fired for not cutting it, and they had to bring in somebody else.

RVH: Do you ever have a situation where an artist on the ice has a problem and you have to adapt the music in some way?

WW: No. It's the responsibility of the artists to get back to where they're supposed to be when they screw up.

RVH: You really don't have much flexibility when working with a tape anyway.

WW: Well, because of the nature of what we do, I can't really ever see trying to skip bars or jump the music, even if it were live. I can't anticipate those things. It's different from working with a singer. If the singer decides to change things midstream, or says, "I can't sing this phrase because it goes too high," I might change things around, or skip a section of the music, but here I really can't.

RVH: I noticed you're using a Remo *PTS* kit. Why?

WW: Well, it's kind of a new thing, and they're working out real well for the gig. They're real lightweight, and they're easy to move around. I have an endorsement agreement with Remo, and I was interested in getting involved with a new product.

RVH: Speaking of moving around, this is obviously a truck show. How big is the moving operation?

WW: They've got four semis for the show, and another truck for the concessions. Of course, when traveling I don't personally move my equipment, but I do have to move it from the rehearsal space to the bandstand on opening day, and pack it up for loading into the trucks. With those *PTS* drums I can flip the heads off, stack them all inside each other and have only four cases to deal with, instead of the eight I would otherwise need. I'm using my own snare drum, and we've changed the sound of the *PTS* drums a little by putting some lower-pitched heads on them. It's not like the dark *PTS* head. It's a darker, lower head that I asked Remo to make up. For the Ice Capades situation where I'm miked, they work out okay.

RVH: What about your cymbals?

WW: I endorse Zildjian cymbals. I use a 20" K. ride, a 20" A. ride, 16" and 18" *Amir* crashes, and 14" A. hi-hats.

RVH: Run down the list of the "toys" you use for sound effects.

WW: Siren, slide whistle, triangle, ratchet, woodblock, cowbell, bird whistle, train whistle, and a big bulb horn. I'll use whatever is required for certain sound effects that comedians like.

RVH: Is your background in total percussion?

WW: Yes. I studied at North Texas State University for about four years. Before that, I had a real strong background in symphonic-type percussion. At North Texas, I got more into drumset and did a lot of jazz playing. Going to school there prepares you for doing a lot of different styles; they stress that. And that's one thing that's important on this gig, because we'll do something that's kind of a funky rock-type thing, then something that's big band jazz, then a mambo/Latin beat, then some real 2/4 show stuff, and then there might be a 16-bar section where I'll play some legit snare drum. One thing that I would suggest to anybody interested in doing this kind of gig is be prepared to do all these different styles.

RVH: With that in mind, how did you break into this? How might someone else land a gig like yours?

WW: There's a former teacher of mine at North Texas named Ron Fink, and he recommended me. He also recommended a couple of other people who've been on this gig before me. He has a working relationship with the Ice Capades; he's a contractor locally in the Dallas area. They know he has a lot of good players among his students. From time to time they've called him to let him know they were looking for someone, and he's given them some names. It just goes from there.

RVH: The Ice Capades tour is not what I'd consider grueling. You play a minimum of five days in a given city, and sometimes up to two weeks. So it isn't a lot of one nighters.

WW: That is an advantage of this gig. It's not as hard as being on the road with a band where you set up and tear down each night, and you're on the bus or the plane the next day. Consequently, you've got some time on your hands that you can really use to practice, and work on certain things you want to do. It's important to realize what you're doing this particular gig for, because it's not something that you're going to do for the rest of your life. You might do it for a year or two, and then move on to something else. You have to keep your career goals, your personal goals, and your spiritual goals all moving in a positive direction. In this situation, with only three musicians traveling with the show, you have only those other two people who are into what *you're* into. The rest of the people you're traveling with are into different things. It can be a situation where you can have a good time, and spend a lot of time "hanging out," which is what a lot of people do, or you can try to project your free time into promoting your music: practicing, getting out and meeting contractors, meeting players, going out from city to city and sitting in—just using your time in a positive mode. I think that a lot of people who go on the road get into a gig like this. Before they know it, they've stayed five years, but they don't really have much to show for it.

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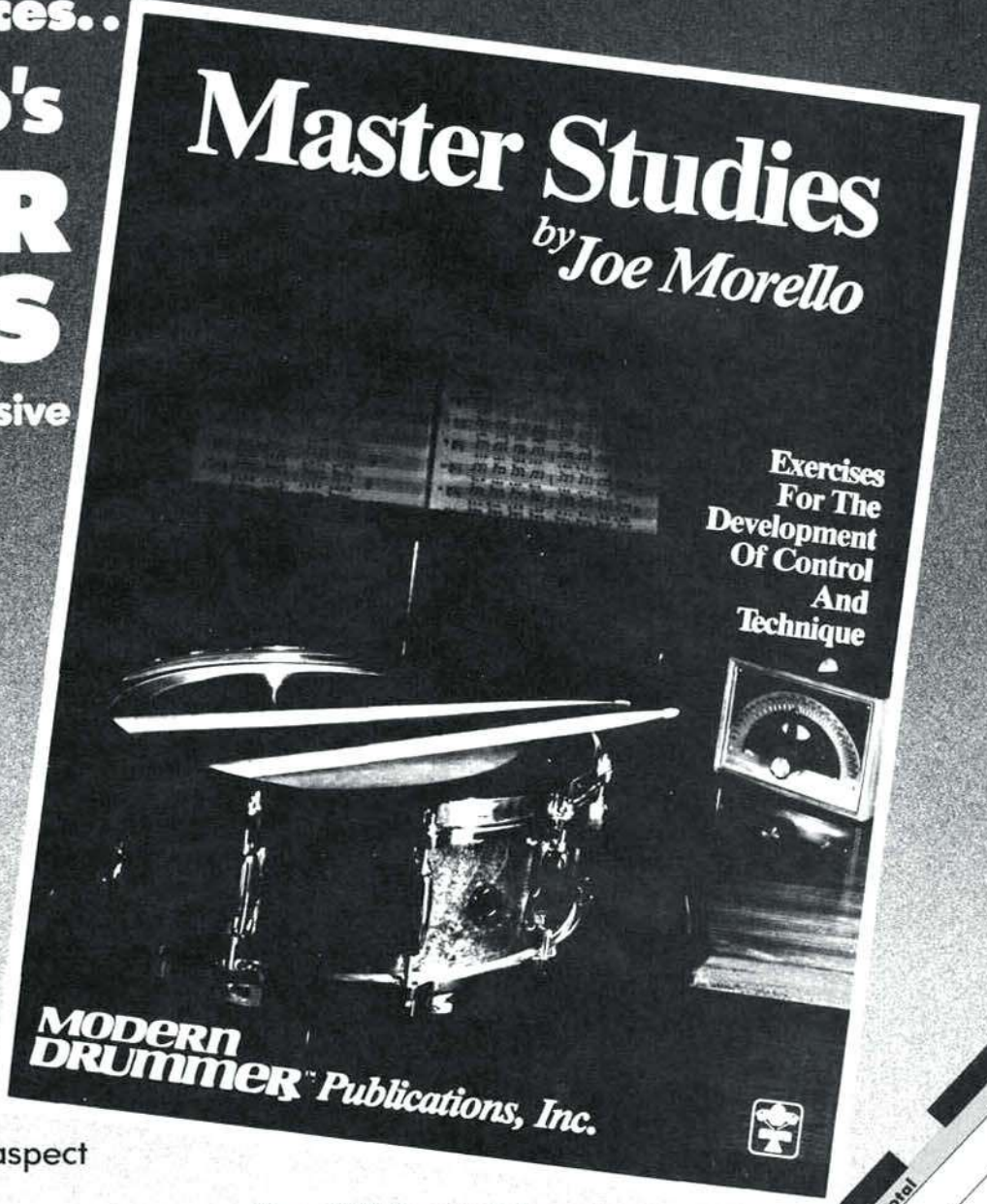
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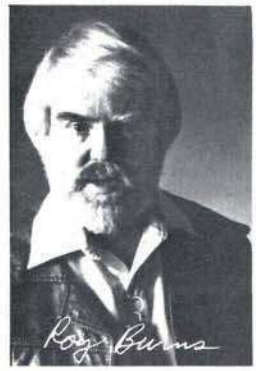

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Danelli *continued from page 29*

MW: Rhythmically you were doing things that a lot of other bands at the time weren't, like you went from the straight four to a shuffle on that tune.

DD: That was the jazz thing. Felix was into jazz too. He was very into Jimmy Smith. He also learned a lot from a guy named Carl Lattimore, but he had Jimmy Smith down pat. I got a lot of stuff from a guy named Willie Davis, who drummed for Joey Dee. Actually, I stole a lot of stuff from him. He'd play a solo and jump up on his seat. He had incredible showmanship.

MW: When I say "Good Lovin'," what's the first thing that comes into your mind?

DD: The Barge. Playing the Barge night after night with the kids going wild. "Good Lovin' " was the classic Barge song. That summer was the best summer of my life. We all lived across the street from the club. We had beautiful, rich girls all over the place. Max, it was like paradise!(Laughs.)

MW: What about "People Got To Be Free"?

DD: Jamaica. Me and Felix down in Jamaica. We were on vacation down there and Felix wrote it then. You know, we got a lot of heat because of that record. Atlantic said it was too political and that it went against the grain. They didn't want to release it but we stuck to our guns, and it turned out to be the biggest record we ever had. Basically, the song was a reaction to the bullshit things that were happening in the sixties.

MW: On "It's Wonderful," you can hear that sixties psychedelic approach.

DD: We were stretching out a bit, being influenced by what the Beatles were doing. To me, that stuff never came off right. I know I wasn't comfortable with it. It didn't come from us, and it wasn't the way we were used to making records. See, the whole era was changing. The guitarists were coming into the spotlight, and our music had always been organ-based. Probably that's one of the reasons why we did things like "It's Wonderful," with tapes and things to stay current. That's when each of us started looking different ways, anyhow. It was kind of the beginning of the end.

MW: What was the last record the original Rascals made before the band broke up?

DD: *Search and Nearness* was the last Rascals album we all made together. Felix and I went on with the Rascals after that, but Eddie had split. There were no hits on that record. It was over by that time. It started at the beginning of that album, and by the end, we had disintegrated totally. We were just showing up and doing our parts and going home. I wanted out at that point too. My ego was just as bad as theirs. I was adding fuel to the fire, I'm sure. It's sad, but we all were ready to go on to new musical things. It got to be such a formula. I know I got bored. So Felix and I said, "Let's do a

couple of jazz albums." Columbia Records was interested. Atlantic was becoming disenchanted with us. So we went over to Columbia and made the *Peaceful World* album, a jazz-oriented record. We got all these great players, great jazz legends to play on the record. The album didn't really work.

MW: Was this when you began getting into art?

DD: I was always kind of into art, but not really until I could actually afford it. I was making steel sculptures, twenty feet high. I had a duplex apartment with a big airy garden, and I was doing all my work there. It was a very expensive type of art. At that point I was looking forward to quitting the Rascals and becoming a full-time artist.

MW: You were often involved with the illustration of the Rascals' album covers.

DD: The *Once upon a Dream* album was the best album cover. For that record I did sculptures that represented the dreams of each guy in the band. It even won a graphics award.

That's what made me think I could go into art and make it without any problems, not knowing that to make it in art is a lot harder than making it in music. A rude awakening for me! When the Rascals split up, I went over to Germany and was just going to get into being an artist and not play music ever again. I stayed in an art colony for five months, but I missed music too much. I couldn't stop my hands and feet from moving whenever I heard a song on the radio.

MW: After the Rascals broke up and you returned from Europe, what happened?

DD: Gene Cornish and I produced a Canadian group called April Wine. We did an album with them that went gold. But that didn't do us any good in the States. It didn't matter, though, because I wasn't ready to be just a producer. I still had the drums in my system. So we came back to the States and started a band called Bulldog, which was a very short-lived thing. We had a Top Forty hit single, "No," but the band wasn't meant to be. A couple of guys were into drugs, a couple of guys weren't. We split up after an album, and Gene and I started Fotomaker. Fotomaker was a good band, but in 1978 it was out of its time. It was pop music, very Beatles-oriented, very English. We were on Atlantic, and just as we started to write and develop a sound, the money ran out.

MW: There was talk some time ago that there might possibly be a Rascals reunion. Would you like to see that happen?

DD: Yeah, because I'd like to see a live album of Rascals music, which is something we always wanted to do. I would like to have it for myself. I think the best of that music still holds up very well. I've got some years behind me now, and today, I see the beauty of that band where I never did before. That's why a reunion would be good. And who knows where it would go?

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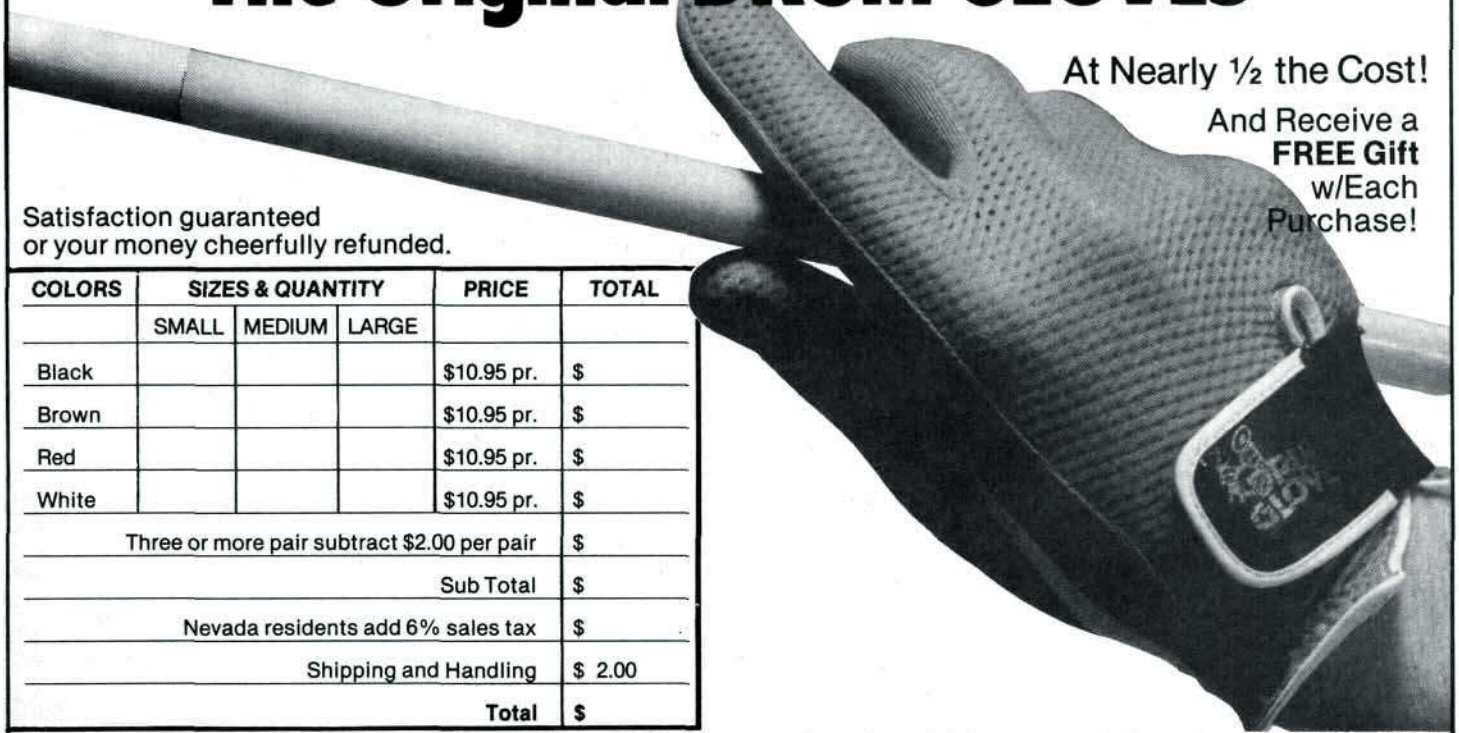

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Ask A Pro continued from page 6

TOMMY ALDRIDGE

Q. I am 14 years old and have been playing drums for about five years. I play to records all the time, and I learn by copying other drummers such as you. I can't seem to get how you played the intro to "Over The Mountain" on Ozzy Osbourne's *Diary Of A Madman* album. Can you explain how you did it?

Anthony D'Erasmo
Mahopac, NY

A. On "Over The Mountain" almost everyone thought it was done with two bass drums, but it was just one. It was really just an open flam with a bass drum beat fitted in between the two beats of the flam. The flam was played with sticks, with the grace note on the snare and the heavier note on a rack tom, and with the bass drum beat put in between, you almost get a "buzz triplet" effect.

JERRY MERCER

Q. Could you please run down the drums, cymbals and chimes you used on the *Nature Of The Beast* album with April Wine?

Ron Gerber
Hartstown, PA

A. That was the last album that we did where I was using my Milestone drums, and they were as follows: 17x22 and 17x20 bass drums; 10x8, 10x10, 8x12 and 9x13 rack toms; and 14x14, 16x16 and 16x18 floor toms. The cymbals were Zildjian at that time, including a 21" A. medium ride, a 22" Pang *cymbal with the reversed edges, a 20" K. medium crash, an 18" A. medium crash and a 16" K. thin crash. My hi-hat on my left foot was made of 14" cymbals: The bottom was the heavy* Quick-Beat *with the flat cymbal and three holes drilled in it; the top was a 14" A. medium crash. I also kept a closed hi-hat on my right side that I could adjust for various types of sounds, and I was using two 13" cymbals there: The bottom was an A. heavy, and the top was an A. medium. The very delicate wind chimes I picked up from Morocco. Since then we've cut* Power Play, *and a new album scheduled for release this spring. On those albums I'm playing Sonor* Signature *drums in the same basic sizes, and Sabian cymbals.*

BURLEIGH DRUMMOND

Q. I know that in the past you've used a multitude of set combinations. What kit are you most committed to now, and do you use any special snare miking techniques?

Sean McPherson
Houston, TX

A. The kit I'm using the most now is a Drum Workshop kit, with 9x10, 10x12, 11 x 13 and 12 x 14 rack toms, a 17x16 floor tom and a 16x22 bass drum. I use a variety of snare drums. The DW kit gets the big sound that I like. I can always tone it down if I have to, but it has the sound to begin with, within the drum, and that's what I'm excited about. I use the Gauger R.I.M.S. *mounting system, with Tama hardware. My cymbals are all Zildjians, with a 24" A. ride for the heavy rock work, and a 21" K. ride that I prefer for sessions. Then I have an 18" crash, a 17" crash, and 14" hi-hats. I also hang a lot of junk—like the backs of washing machines, and car doors—around me. I bang around on them a lot, live as well as in the studio. When I go in to do a techno-pop session, a lot of the effects that they want and think ought to be produced electronically, turn out better on my junk metal. The producers will prefer that to real hi-hats or cymbal sounds, or even to the electronic sounds. As far as snare miking goes, that varies with the engineer. But one thing I've noticed is that British engineers tend to use a system of close miking combined with ambient, or "room"miking, where the American engineers tend to stick to the close-miking technique alone. On Ambrosia's* Road Island *album, there were three sets of ambient mikes recording simultaneously.*

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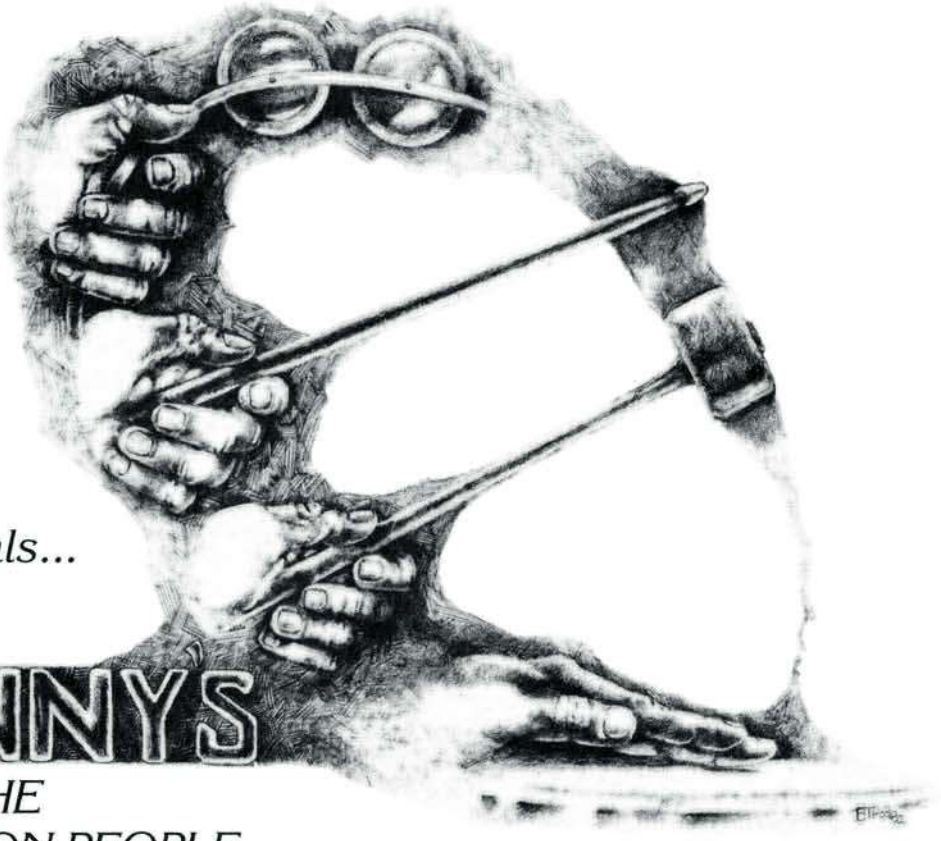

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STAYING IN TUNE

MD readers can write to Hal Blaine in care of: Staying In Tune, Modern Drummer Magazine, 1000 Clifton Ave., Clifton, NJ 07013

by Hal Blaine

Q. I'm a sophomore in high school and have been playing drums since the seventh grade. I'm known in my school for my drumming. People in school tell me I'm great and I'll probably make it big as a famous drummer, but I really don't understand how they can tell me that when I know they've never heard me! Believe me, I'm not as good as people think I am! I want to get real good real fast, but I get very mad when I still can't do something right. I need to develop my own style. My idol is John Bonham, and just by listening to me play, you can tell I am the John Bonham type of drummer. I respect you a lot and hope you can help me.

J.B.
Niles, IL

A. John Bonham was a great drummer. I just want to tell you that John Bonham didn't make it overnight, and neither did most really fine drummers. Maybe you heard of them overnight, but they worked for many years to get where they are. You've got to learn how to read, study those drums, and learn how to play them. You'll find that you're way ahead of the drummer who tries to be another John Bonham just by playing fast and loud.

Don't have just one idol. Start listening to *everybody.* Bonham was great—you can love him forever—but listen to other people. There's more to life than just one particular thing. When you say that you can develop your own style, you're absolutely right. Listening to other people will help you develop your own style. So get in there and do it.

Q. My question is this: There are records out called Drum Drops/or *musicians other than drummers to play along with. Are there any recordings that have all the instruments, excluding drums, that a drummer could play along with? If there are, could you please tell me how I could get hold of such a treasure? Also, do you know of any drumset teachers in Alaska?*

A. W.
Fairbanks, AK

A. I must say that I don't know of any drumset teachers in Alaska, but I would suggest this: There must be some good drummers in the military bands at that great Air Force base up there. I'm sure that one of the officers in charge of music would be happy to help you. As to your question about records, Music Minus One puts out a number of them. Check with drum shops or music stores. I don't think regular record shops have them. Those records have various arrangements, without drums, for you to play along with.

Q. I've been playing drums for quite a few years and have a problem with four-limb independence. I'm right-handed, and my hi-hat hand always wants to follow my bass drum foot. At first, I thought it was because I was using both right limbs. Since trying to use separate sides of my brain to correct this only seemed logical, I used my left hand on the hi-hat. This did not work, even though I was able to keep a steady rhythm. I still keep good time without the use of this skill, but it's a challenge I'd like to meet. It would improve my drumming, and it bothers me that I can't seem to grasp it. Can you give me any hand and foot rudiments, or suggest something to work on? Is my problem common? Keep up the good work Hal; it's good to know you're there when we need you.

S.K.
Micanopy, FL

A. All I can say is, independent coordination is not something that most of us are born with; it's something that you have to work on. I personally used to start with just a snare drum to coordinate my hands. Then I would add a bass drum to work on my right foot, and then a hi-hat to work on my left foot. Jim Chapin's books are wonderful works on independent coordination. They're very difficult, but the Chapin books gave me more independent coordination than anything else. Take your time. One of the secrets is to start out slowly on those things. Generally, we are much too impatient to play fast and play a lot of notes. That's really not necessary. Follow that book very, very slowly at first, and little by little you will find that somehow you'll start to grasp it. Another thing that I think helps tremendously is to start writing down those things. Somehow, the hand, the eye, and the brain coordinate when you look at certain things and write them down. That way, they are more likely to stick in your mind than if you just look at them. It wouldn't hurt also to study some music theory and harmony, as well as music appreciation and history in order to become a well-rounded drummer/percussionist. Once you break through, you'll find that it's just a wonderful feeling.

Q. I am a 16-year-old drummer still studying at school in England. People who have heard me play say I play naturally. I used to teach, and I have been asked to record, but I feel an obligation to my school work. I believe I have potential and my ambition is to drum professionally. I know the United States is the place to come, but where?

O.P.
Clifton, Bristol, England

A. As a 16 year old, I don't think that you should be in too big a hurry to get to the States. If that is your ambition, then obviously that is something that you will eventually do, but give yourself some time. You're studying at school, and people say that you play naturally and should record. I think that it's very important for you to do those things and get that kind of experience. If you want to be a professional, drumming is like any other profession: You have to know the business. You also have to know the recording business, if that's what you really want. It's best not to walk in and just start drumming. You have to know something about the microphones, etc. I would suggest that you go to whatever recording studios you may find in your surrounding area. Talk to some local musicians or teachers. I find that most professionals are really very happy to help a youngster who is starting out, has ambition, and wants to learn.

I suggest that you get to London, see some of the shows, and meet some of the drummers who come into town. Perhaps you could get together with a few other instrumental players who are in your same position, share a ride, and visit as a group. I do think that you should continue your studies—*please* don't drop out of school—continue practicing, read all that you can, and then try to get into some of the studios to see what's really going on. I think you'll enjoy it.

Q. I am in an original rock 'n' roll band and we just went into the studio to record a demo. Our management hired a producer to help us in the production, and we were told that what he says goes. Well, he convinced the band and our management that, although I was a good drummer, he would not use any *drummer on a record, no matter who that drummer was. He said that he would save thousands of dollars by using the Linn machine. I almost died. I felt hurt on the inside and my mental state was on the borderline. But I love the music and stuck with it. The Linn wound up sounding like disco, and now the gang is back on my side. I can go into the studio next time around with* my *idea of how we should re-*

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N.G.
Bronx, NY

A. I know what you're going through. I've lost quite a few accounts lately because of the Linn machine and Simmons. It's one of those things you have to learn to live with. You're in an electronic age right now. Learn as much as you can about the Linn drum machine and programming it. Also, learn as much as you can about the Simmons. There are still certain sessions you *cannot* play those machines on; certain arrangers and contractors still want live drums on their sessions.

However, there is another side to the coin. You can set a drum machine and walk away from it, and it's going to play the same thing every time. When your producer says that he is going to save thousands of dollars by using a Linn machine, you can't feel bad. You should hope that by using a Linn drum machine, the band will make a good demo and get a record deal. With such a record deal, eventually, *you'll* really be making the records. *You'll* be going out there making the big money, and the Linn drum machine can sit home in the studio. So you've got to learn to hang in there as part of the group you're with. Take the good with the bad, and in the long run, you're going to come out ahead.

Q. Does the age at which someone begins to study set playing have a bearing on one's rate of improvement on the set? I'm 36 years old and have studied for roughly the last three years. Although I'm in excellent physical condition and have always been called "well coordinated," my development as a set player has been rough and slow going. Assuming I'm practicing enough of the right things, could my problem be my late start?

V.C.
Mahtomedi, MN

A. I'm happy you wrote me because I can tell you right now, if you've only been playing for three years, you need at least another three years. It's not your physical condition. You just have to practice a little bit longer. You're just starting. Thirty-six is perfect—the perfect prime.

Q. I am 25 years old and have been playing the drums for the past 11 years. I have studied privately, and still do, and have also studied in the university setting. I am into jazz, bebop, swing, and big band, but have played many other types of music besides those. I find myself constantly bothered by just one aspect of my drumming, which is not having that little ten percent that separates the men from the boys. Mind you, I do not want to be another Buddy Rich or Elvin Jones. It is just that the drummers I watch and listen to are so complete that I feel that I am never catching up on this last ten percent. Your thoughts on this would be most appreciated.

J.R.
Los Angeles, CA

A. It sounds to me like you are doing everything absolutely right. When you say you don't want to be another Buddy Rich or Elvin Jones, what do you mean? You say they're so complete. You've been playing for the past 11 years. Do you know how many years Buddy has been playing? Or Elvin? Three times 11, at least. Give it a little time and you'll absolutely be there. I'm sure Elvin used to think the same thing about Buddy Rich. Every drummer that I know has gone through the stage of wondering: "When am I really going to happen? When is it going to happen for me?" Give it some time and it will happen.

Q. I've been playing drums for 25 years. I am now 35 years old. Over the last six months or so, I've been noticing that I'm developing a "lazy left foot." Usually during our second set of a job, I glance over and notice I'm not playing my hi-hat. This is true only on fast songs. Once I notice it, I start to play again, but shortly afterwards I stop again and my foot is just resting on the hi-hat pedal. This really worries me. Is it lack of concentration ? Playing the hi-hat should be an automatic thing. Maybe I've been doing this over a longer period of time and just never noticed it before.

J.S.
Lancaster, PA

A. If you want to retrain that brain, get rid of the sticks, get rid of the brushes, sit there, and start playing just bass drum and hi-hat. Give it 45 minutes to an hour a day. Put your hands in your pockets. Play any tempos you want, but just play bass drum and hi-hat afterbeat. Try that for a few days and you'll see that it will start coming right back to you. You're not getting lazy. You're just showing a little lack of concentration, I think.

Q. I am 15 years old and a pretty good drummer. I want to make a career of drums but can't figure out where to start. I have been thinking lately that, if I don't get in a band, my career will never get started. But on the other hand, I have been thinking about taking lessons and learning how to read music. Should I join a band or take lessons?

B.D.
Troutdale, OR

A. If you want to make a career of drums, there is only one way to start, and that is to know your instrument; know everything about it. Learn how to read music, get your hands in shape, get your feet in shape, and get your eyes in shape for that music. Obviously, you have an ear for music, so your ears will come along. When you have all that stuff in good shape, you'll be ready and you'll go much further than the person who isn't ready. Give yourself a chance. You're still young yet. In the next couple of years, you'll be doing yourself a real service by really studying. Then, when the right band comes along, you'll be ready for it.

Q. tor me past two years I nave been playing snare drum in my school marching band, which is corps oriented. Our drumline instructor insists that the proper grip for the right hand is with the palm parallel to the drumhead. This seems like an unnatural way for the wrist to move. What are your feelings on this grip? Ever since I have been playing this way, I have had a sharp pain on the back of my hand, in my wrist, and all throughout my forearm. This pain occurs very frequently. Do you think it has any relation to this grip?

C.C.
St. Charles, MO

A. Your teacher is right. At least, that is the method that I always learned: palm parallel to the drumhead. Though it seems unnatural to you at the moment, 1 think once you develop this you will feel very comfortable with it. But by the same token, comfort is in the hand of the person holding the sticks, so I think it's very important for you to find what is comfortable for you. As I recall, when playing in the sitting position, we were always taught that the snare drum should be the same level as your forearm and elbow, as it hangs. I would think that approximately the same relationship should occur when playing in a marching position. I'm sure that the pain is occurring frequently because of your relationship to this grip. I think you're going to have to find the most comfortable place to hold your sticks—the place that feels best for *you.* Hopefully, a little bit of experimentation should find that place as you're walking and playing.

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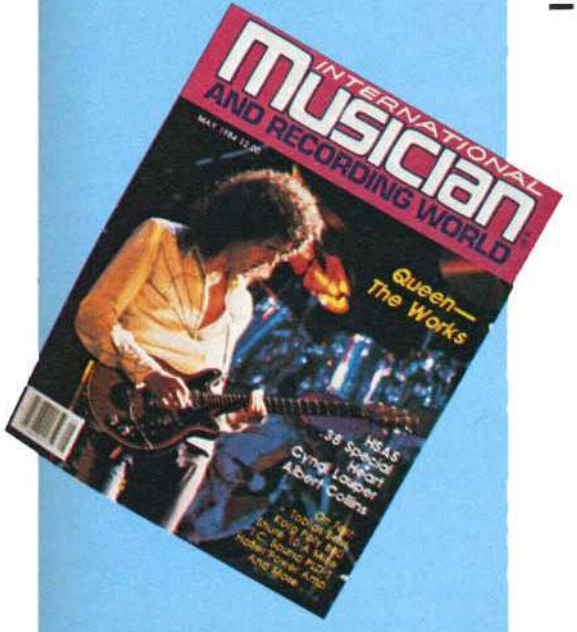

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Q. I would like to obtain some information on having some songs copyrighted. I would like to find out whether the material must be written out or if a tape will suffice, the approximate cost, and what agency or department I should send it to.

K.L.
Studio City, CA

A. You'll be able to find most of the information you need by obtaining a pamphlet entitled "Copyright Basics" from the U.S. Government Information office. Most cities have a phone listing under the "U.S. Government" heading which you can call to request this pamphlet, which will be mailed to you at no charge. For more specific information, you may write the Information and Publications Section, LM-455, Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20559.

Q. I'm in a heavy metal band and 1 only have two inputs on our mixing board. My drumset consists of two bass drums, two floor toms, four rack toms, a snare, hi-hat, ride cymbal and two crash cymbals. My drums are single-headed but I'm thinking about putting heads on the front of my bass drums. What is the best way to mike my drums?

S.W.
Florence, SC

A. There are several methods you might employ, depending on your budget. If there are only two channels available on your main mixing board, but you still want to totally mike your kit, you 'II need to get a small sub-mix board of your own. Then use as many mic's as you need to mike up the kit concert-style, and run your sub-mix into the main board. If you must stick with the two channels and can't afford a sub-mix system, we would suggest using one channel as a general overhead mix, placing the mic' on a boom placed centrally over the kit as low as practical. For the other channel, it will be necessary to get some sort of "Y" cord or two-channel mini-mixer (which are not very expensive) to mike both bass drums into the other channel on the board. This will at least closely mike the basic beat, and the overall kit sound will be enhanced as much as possible given your limitations. As far as putting a front head on the bass drums is concerned, that would probably be advisable for heavy metal. You will want to experiment with dampening inside the drums, and probably use a small hole cut out of the front heads, in which to place the mic's. The sound you want to achieve will be a matter of your personal taste, so experiment with mic' placement too.

Q. I would like to know if it is good or bad to practice while looking in mirrors. I think it is helpful in developing a professional form and appearance. 1 would like your opinion on the matter.

F.W.
The Bronx, NY

A. Watching yourself practice in a mirror can be beneficial in a variety of ways. As you say, your "form and appearance" are made evident to you, including facial expressions and elements of showmanship that are important if you are a performer. From a purely technical standpoint, mirrors can reveal problems in posture, and provide a different perspective as to drum setup, grip, physical tension, etc. The only drawback is that it can sometimes be difficult to maintain your concentration on what you are practicing, and yet pay attention to the mirror. In some cases, you might tend to be your own "audience." This creates an unnatural aspect in your playing. If you can focus on the practicing and still objectively evaluate what's happening in the mirror, you can gain a great deal of worthwhile information about your playing habits.

Q. As I was reading the *Paiste Profiles 3* book, I noticed that many great drummers (Nicko McBrain and Clive Bunker for example) use drumsticks called *Foote.* I have tried to get the address of the company or individual, but have been unsuccessful. Can you help?

H.M.
North Brunswick, NJ

A. We asked Simon Goodwin to research your question in England, and he came up with the following information: Foote *drumsticks are specially made in England for a famous and established London Music shop, Charles E. Foote. The stick models, starting with the smallest, are as follows: The* S *is a very light "pencil-slim" stick. The* L, E, *and* C *are all the same design as the equivalent sticks in the Premier range. Next, there are the* RK, *which is slightly lighter than the* C, *and the* C +, *which is like a* C *but an inch longer. The* 11A *is a copy of the Ludwig* Joe Morello *stick. Finally, the 107 and 147 are short, thick and heavy. AII sticks are made from the best quality hickory, and all models are available with wood or nylon tips, apart from the* S, 707 *and* 747, *which are only available with wood tips. Contact Charles E. Foote Ltd., 17 Golden Square, London W1R3AG, England for further information.*

Q. I own a Tama *Swingstar* drumset. The interior of each drum is coated with a speckled coating. Is there a way to remove this, and if so, will varnishing the insides of the shells increase the projection of my set?

K.C
Rutherford, NJ

A. The coating you describe sounds like a sealer applied to the interior, partially for cosmetic appeal and partially as an attempt to enhance the sound. As far as removing it, we consulted with Kenny Williams of Drumland in San Francisco, who gave the folio wing instructions: "Try a small section first using paint remover. If it works, then continue the process. Clean it all off with paint thinner. When this is dry, prepare the surface for the new finish by hand sanding. Remove all of the old finish before applying the new. Apply a stain, and then varnish. Varnishing the interior of a drumshell will help increase the projection of the drum to some degree."

Q. I've been writing out a lot of drum parts and exercises for personal charts. Whenever I see drum parts in *Rock Perspectives, Rock 'n' Jazz Clinic,* etc., they always look so nice. Do you use some type of typewriter that writes these parts? Could you tell me where I might buy one or give me the name of a company that makes these music writing machines?

M.R.
San Jose, CA

A. The music that appears on our pages is all done by a professional music typesetter in New York City. They take handwritten music, probably very much like yours, and typeset it for publication in Modern Drummer. *You can, of course, have your own music professionally typeset in the same manner—there are music printers in most large cities—but it tends to be expensive. If you wish to obtain a music typewriter to create the music in the first place, you might check into the* Musicwriter, *manufactured by Music Print Corporation, 2450 Central Avenue, Boulder, CO 80301, or call them at (303) 442-5500.*

Q. Could you please tell me what the difference is between conventional tom-toms (8x12, 10x14) and deep tom-toms (12x12, 14x14)? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these different sizes?

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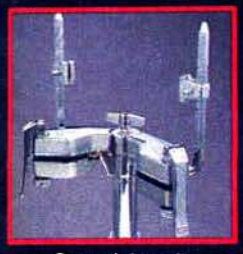

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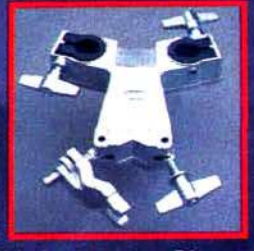

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G.M.
White Plains, NY

A. The advantages and disadvantages depend on your needs. Deeper-shelled drums give a deeper, fuller sound. If this is what you want and can use (say on a hard-rock or fusion gig) then it's an advantage. But if that sound is inappropriate to what you're playing (i.e., light lounge music or small-group jazz) then it might be a disadvantage. If you play a wide variety of musical styles and types of gigs, the more conventional sizes might be more versatile. In terms of setups, it can be difficult to obtain the exact kit setup you like with larger drums, simply due to the physical dimensions. If you like to sit low, with toms mounted low over the bass drum, the conventional sizes will allow a more compact setup. They are also lighter to lug around if you travel a lot. The initial cost for the larger drums is greater, as is the cost for cases. You might also require more expensive, heavy-duty hardware to mount the drums. All these considerations should be taken into account, in addition to the acoustic properties of each size, before making your decision.

Q. Recently I got a Slingerland *Radio King* snare from around 1940. I'd like to have Paul Jamieson customize it for recording. Can I send it to him, or does he only do the work for the big boys in Hollywood?

T.H.
Oxford, MS

A. Paul informed us that he does work "for the little guys too, as long as their checks are good. " You can write to Paul for information and details in care of Toto, 7250 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036.

Q. I've read in a number of instances about sealing the inside of drumshells to take out "inconsistencies." What exactly are the inconsistencies? Does this have to do with tuning also? Can I get some of the sealer developed for Tama's *Artstars* for my *Superstars!*

L.H.
Whitby, Ontario, Canada

A. The sealer on the inside of a drumshell serves several purposes. The most important is to seal the grain of the wood to prevent moisture from entering the shell (hence the term "sealer"). In some cases, an opaque sealer is used to help cover cosmetic imperfections (or "inconsistencies") in the shells, such as knots, nicks, or poor glue seams, which can occur even in well-made shells. A sealer will also give a smoother, more even interior finish to the shell, helping to improve projection. As far as tuning, some sealers can give a brighter overall sound to a drum (as opposed to one without a sealer, which might tend to be a little warmer in sound) and that will affect the tuning. In some cases, wood drums are treated with an interior finish of an especially reflective material (such as Neil Peart's "Vibra-Fibed" drums) to further enhance their projection.

Although Tama does not market their factory-applied sealant, you can "seal" the interior of your shells with varnish if you desire. This process has been outlined several times in previous issues o/MD. *If you're in need of assistance, we suggest you contact the repair department of your local music store or, failing that, a good cabinetmaker.*

Q. I finally found a stick with the proper balance, feel and head size for my playing style. They were made by Tama, size *11A.* The sticks were tapered—smaller at the butt end, increasing in the middle, and then tapering back down again towards the bead. The problem is that Tama has apparently discontinued this great stick. Would it be possible to special order some of these sticks, or could you tell me of any other manufacturer producing this type of stick?

G.S.
Wieser, ID

A. We spoke to Bill Reim, of Tama, who informed us that Tama is currently in the process of redesigning and experimenting with their stick line. It may be that they will be offering the stick you like under another model designation. Our research indicates that the Tama model 11A *currently on the market does not have the tapered silhouette that you describe. However, Calato / Regal Tip offers a tapered model called the* Jake Hanna, *which might suit your needs. It is 16" long (3/8" longer than the Tama* 11A*) and has a nylon tip. Pro-Mark also offers* an 11A *model at 15 5/8" long (the same as the Tama), but it is not tapered.*

Q. I have a double bass drum set with three toms. Two of the toms are held up by my right bass drum. I also have a cowbell, but I have no place to put it. I am right-handed, so I'd prefer it to be on the right side of my set. Any suggestions on reasonable hardware to enable me to do this?

R.M.
Warren, MI

A. There are several ways to mount a cowbell in a convenient and economical manner. You can use one of the many clamping devices on the market, such as Cosmic Percussion's Accessory Clamp, *Remo's* AD 100 Universal Adapter, *or Tama's* Multi-Clamp, *to attach a cowbell mounting rod to the hardware holding your rack toms, thus putting the bell in a convenient place between the two mounted toms. Or if you have the space beneath a crash cymbal, you can mount a bell lower down on a cymbal stand, possibly just off the edge of the floor tom. Either of these methods would put the bell in a good position for ride work, and would not cost as much as a separate cymbal stand to mount only the bell.*

Q. I bought a Rogers five-piece set (circa 1963) in hopes of restoring it. The shells are in good shape, but the hardware is not. (It's the old Swiv-O-Matic type). I've been told I can use the *Memriloc* hardware, but I'd rather not redrill the shells, and besides, I'd like to restore it as close to the original as possible. I've written to Rogers, and about 50 drum shops around the country. Nobody seems to be able to help. Can you put me in touch with someone or someplace that could help?

G.S.
Aberdeen, MD

A. Finding parts for any out-of-production drum line is always difficult. The manufacturers generally do not have much of the older model hardware around, since production space and storage cost money, and the demand is relatively small. Dealers are in the same boat, although they generally will keep obsolete parts around if they can find them, in order to stock their repair departments. But since retail stores have *to deal in new merchandise, you may wish to research other sources for used equipment. One alternative might be local pawnshops, where older instruments are often traded for cash. You might also place an ad in the classified sections of newspapers, and of course, the music trade journals such as* MD. *Keep in touch with the drum shops, though, since they will periodically come across some little gem. Ken Mezines, whose shop is at 11207 Olive St., Creve Coeur, MO 63141, (314) 432-4945, specializes in collecting, restoring and reselling older drums. Ken informed us that he may have some Rogers equipment from the era in which you're working. You might also contact Charlie Donnelly, at Drum Centre, Inc., 7East Cedar Street, Newington, CT'06111, (203)667-0535.*

Editors note: In the February '84 issue, we stated that we were unaware of any drum book on the market dealing with double-drummer playing situations. There is, in fact, Drum Set Duets, *by Dom Famularo and Jerry Ricci, published by Drum Center Publications, 2204 Jerusalem Ave., N. Merrick, NY 11566. The book presents various rhythm patterns to be employed by two drummers in a duet situation. It does not specifically deal, however, with the application of two drummers performing together in a band.*

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UPDATE

by Robyn Flans

You may not realize it, but you are barraged by **Steve Schaeffer's** drumming. The list of projects he's done only *lately* is staggering. Some of the films you've heard him on in recent months have been *The Right Stuff, Terms Of Endearment, National Lampoon's Vacation, Gorky Park, Crackers, Unfaithfully Yours, Blame It On Rio and Harry And Son.* The regular TV shows he plays include *Simon And Simon, Dallas, Knots Landing, The Yellow Rose* and *Remington Steel.* He does each one weekly for the 13-week season.

"The requirements of TV and film are different from any of the other recording mediums," Steve stated. "There's less time in terms of the amount of music you play. For a record, you might spend three hours doing a track, but with television, you do a whole episode in three hours. You have to be an expert reader. Plus, my background from school is keyboard and mallet instruments, and you have to be able to double on percussion to be able to do more than 50% of the work. You virtually have to walk in and make a take. You do that all day long. As opposed to being in a recording studio, you're on a big stage with an orchestra, and you have to be able to play intensely at a very soft level so it doesn't leak all over the violins and such. You have to accommodate the microphones a lot more because it's more orchestral in a lot of ways than it would be in straight rock 'n' roll things. Making music for film involves other aspects than those involved in making music just to listen to. You have to catch action, there are a lot of odd time signatures, and all kinds of things are going on."

Speaking of lots going on, Steve also did this year's Grammy show (as well as two previous Grammy shows and the Academy Awards), which provided us with an interesting conversation. What goes in to working a show like that?

"First of all," he answered, "it's a three-and-a-half-hour show. Normally it takes three to six hours just for a half-hour TV show which is maybe only one-third music. The Grammys is music from top to bottom. We rehearsed all day Saturday, Sunday and Monday, and there was a dress rehearsal Tuesday, the day of the show. The working conditions are harder on a show like that. Visually, they put you in a position so it looks good stage-wise for the TV, which doesn't always feel right musically. The violins are 30 feet away from you, so you can't hear everybody acoustically. The drums are way up on a riser, and you need a 12-foot ladder just to get up there. That can be dangerous. You have to be prepared to play for all the productions, even though some acts bring their own drummers, and you don't know who is going to win the award, so you have a choice of six potential people. From the time they say, 'The winner is . . .' you have one second to hear who it is, find the right piece of music, and as drummer, you're in the hot chair. When the conductor gives the downbeat, you have to remember the tempo and have 35 other musicians depending on you to take them through it. There is the normal TV stuff too, aside from the production numbers, such as the cues involved when you go to a station break.

"There are always things that go wrong, too. Last year, in the opening for Ray Charles, somehow a camera ran across a cable and the whole band lost audio. The show was three seconds from air time, the curtain was closed, and Ray Charles was in front with Count Basie, Little Richard and Jerry Lee Lewis. Ray Charles went into his number, and I watched his feet on a little camera trying to remember whether he beat 1 and 3 with his right foot or his left. I played to his feet because I never heard a note he played. The same thing happened this year during the guitar segment with Chuck Berry. The only problem was that they were standing in front of their amps, so I couldn't even see their feet. I had Abe Laboriel watching their feet and pointing to me when they were hitting downbeats, so I could play along. I was the only person who had to play along with them. Talk about being in the hot chair!"

Other projects in which Steve has been involved include a series of concerts with the New American Orchestra, a track for the new A&M act, The Backsters, John Klemmer's new album, an album for Caroline D., Henry Mancini's latest, commercials including Bank Of America, Yamaha and Honda, occasional cartoon shows and a sprinkling of clinics with Vinnie Colaiuta.

Vinnie Colaiuta has been having a lot of fun lately. He's a member of a cooperative instrumental band called (don't laugh) Dog Cheese. (And don't bother asking him why! I think it has something to do with the sense of humor of band members Larry Klein, Mike Landau, Steve Tavaglione and Vinnie.) At their debut show at L.A.'s Baked Potato, though, 200 people were turned away. "It's an opportunity for us to play music that we really enjoy playing without too much concern about the music being commercial for the sake of being commercial," Vinnie explained.

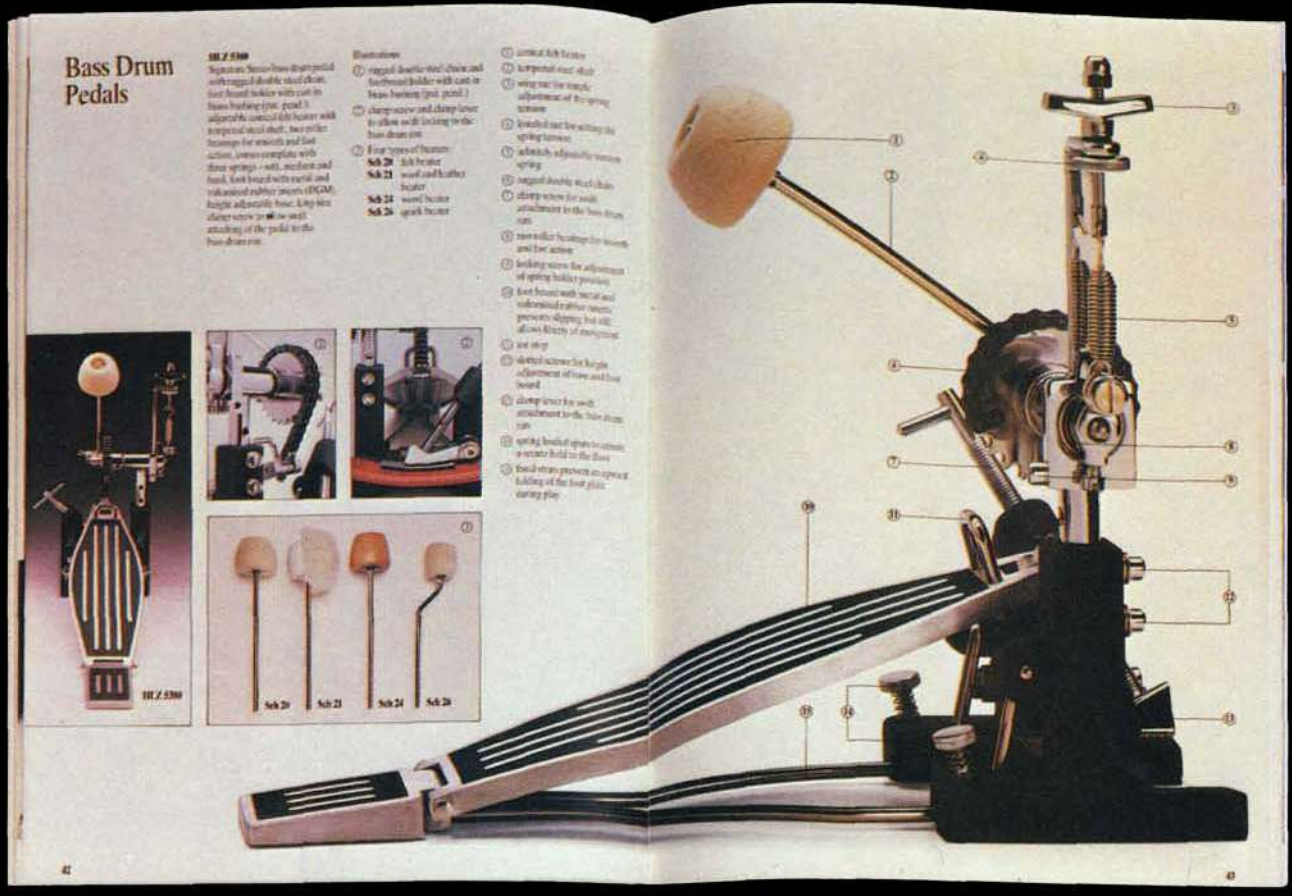
When I asked him if this creative outlet helps keep the studio work fresh, he replied, "Yes and vice versa. I think one hand definitely washes the other from my experience. For example, your sense of timing becomes real centered in the studio, and you have to know what to play at what particular time. You have to continually bend your concept to what somebody else is thinking or second-guess them, and that causes you to have to learn how to take direction. It causes you to use more discretion in your own music, because if you don't have any kind of discipline, you can't employ freedom. In the band situation, you exercise your technical facility a lot more, so when you get in the studio, you pretty well execute what comes to mind. It's like exercising your reflexes. You're playing all this spontaneous stuff. A lot of times, if you have too much time to think about what someone else wants you to play or what you're supposed to play, it can be bad. In a live situation there are endless possibilities of what you can play at any given moment. Obviously you have to use tact and taste in what you're going to play, but you don't have as much time to think about weeding out the differences. Consequently, it's going to come out different every time you play the tunes. But you're relying on a more reactive type of playing, which helps your reflexes so you're just about ready for anything. It makes you quicker on the draw for any other situation, and helps in the studio because you don't stumble as much."

Also, since our November 1982 interview, Vinnie worked in a band situation with Joni Mitchell last year. They went out for three consecutive five-week tours, which was the first time he had been in such a situation since his *Zappa* days. "It was a lot of fun, because it was a small band and real easygoing. We were all friends, we had a lot of room to stretch, and everything was first class."

He did some live gigs with Michael Sembello, in addition to an abundance of studio work, and lately he has even taken on a couple of students. "I never thought I would do it, but it's really worked out as a benefit to me. Teaching makes me have to verbalize things, think back on things, and talk about things that I would normally just do. 'How did you develop this? How do you do this? How do you get to that point?' Sometimes talking about it or visualizing it is a good exercise to prepare you to actually do it"

continued on page 130

A must for drummers



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INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

SECOND INTERNATIONAL JAZZ WORKSHOP

The second International Jazz Workshop will be held at Tubingen, West Germany, from August 10 through August 17, 1984. This will be the first of three jazz clinics in Europe this summer, sponsored by Advance Music. The other two will take place later in Copenhagen, Denmark, and London, England.

Along with name artists from other instrumental fields, the clinicians will include Ed Soph and Adam Nussbaum on drums, and Birger Sulsbruck on percussion.

For further information, please contact Hans Gruber, Advance Music, Stadtlanggasse 9, D-7407 Rottenburg am Neckar, West Germany.

DANMAR MOVES

Danmar Percussion Products, manufacturer of drum hardware and accessories, has moved. All inquiries should be directed to Danmar Percussion Products, 7618 Woodman Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91402, (818)787-3444.

BARBARA BORDEN JOINS GRETSCH

Gretsch drums recently announced the addition of Barbara Borden to its educational-endorsement roster. As a Gretsch artist, Borden will be available for clinic and concert appearances through Gretsch's newly formed educational clinic program.

Borden is recognized in the U.S. as a member of the jazz quintet Alive!, which has already released two albums, *Alive* and *Call It Jazz,* with a third album on its way. The group has toured extensively, appealing to audiences with an appreciation for sensitive yet dynamic contemporary music with a percussive accent. Barbara is also recognized for her numerous percussion workshops and as a producer for her own percussion concerts.

Complete details on clinic scheduling, fees and sponsorship for in-store or local concert use with high school or college groups can be obtained by contacting Gretsch Percussion Marketing Services: P.O. Box 1250, Gallatin, TN 37066, telephone (615) 452-0083.

PEARL SIGNS IMBODEN AND PURDIE

Pearl International has announced the addition of Tris Imboden and Bernard Purdie to its staff of clinician artist/endorsers. Tris, best known for his association with Kenny Loggins, can be seen on Kenny's upcoming tour, and heard on the soundtrack of the motion picture *Footloose.* Bernard is a legendary studio performer, having recorded with the likes of Steely Dan, Aretha Franklin, and the Rolling Stones.

For clinic information, contact Pam Haynie at Pearl International, Inc., P.O. Box 111240, Nashville, TN 37222-1240, or call (615) 833-4477.

CULLY AND GUAGLIANONE NEW SLINGERLAND CLINICIANS

Dick Cully, noted percussionist/bandleader from Boca Raton, Florida, and Hank Guaglianone, winner of the Slingerland Louie Bellson Contest, have recently joined Slingerland as touring clinicians.

Cully, who initiated his program with a series of clinics throughout the Southeast, has studied under such percussionists as James Rago, Alan Dawson and Ed Shaughnessy. His experience includes TV and Studio work, as well as his own 15-piece Dick Cully Big Band, which appears regularly in Boca Raton.

Guaglianone, from the Chicago area, has appeared on the *Tonight Show,* and is currently involved in studio and freelance playing. His clinics will include a description of the *May EA* miking system marketed by Slingerland, as well as the latest product developments in the Slingerland drum lines.

MCLAREN TO PUBLISH REPORT

The *McLaren Report,* a monthly newsletter providing information, analysis and commentary on the musical instrument industry went into publication in May of this year. Using sources from around the world, it will cover topics of interest to everyone in the industry, as well as the related teaching and music education professions. The *Report* will carry no advertising, and will concentrate on providing serious and practical help in managing music businesses.

John McLaren, president of Music Industry Management Services, Inc., will publish the *McLaren Report.* McLaren's career has spanned 25 years in the music industry, beginning as a salesman at Steinway when he arrived from his native England in 1959, continuing through a short stint with Aeolian in the early'60s, 15 years as an executive with Yamaha, and most recently as president of CBS's Musical Instruments Division since February of 1981.

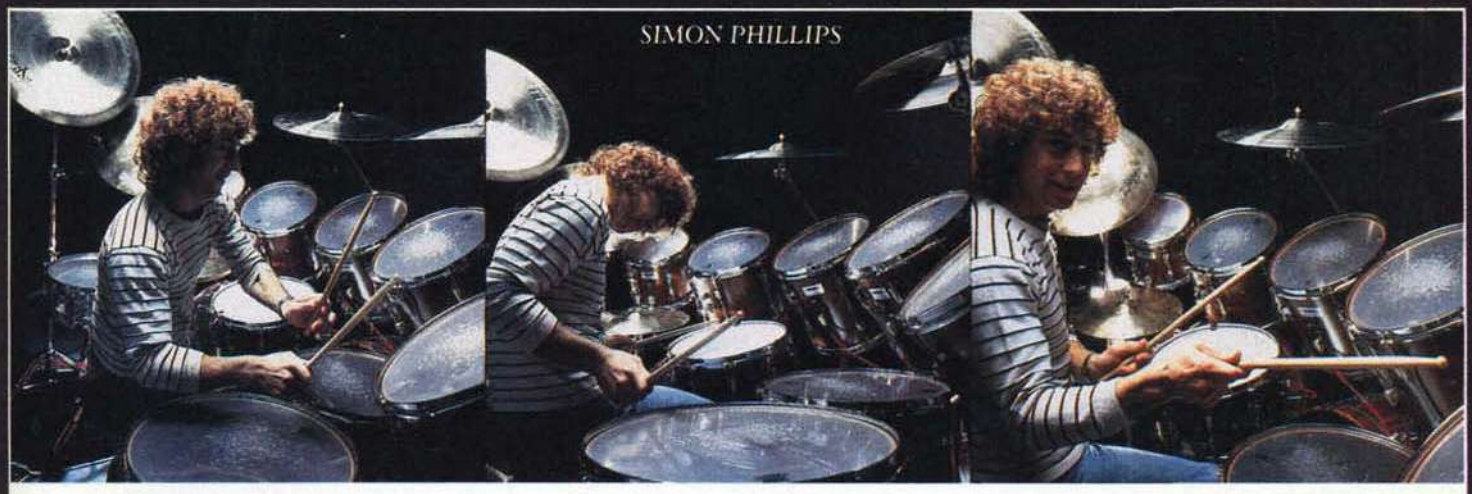
McLaren commented: "I feel excited about starting my own venture after spending so many years with large firms. Senior jobs in big corporations tend to isolate you from the best parts of this business. I now intend to do the thing I enjoy most: working with music people to help them solve problems and create new opportunities. My goal is to have among our subscribers every executive, manager, salesperson, engineer and technician in the music business, plus as many teachers and music educators as possible."

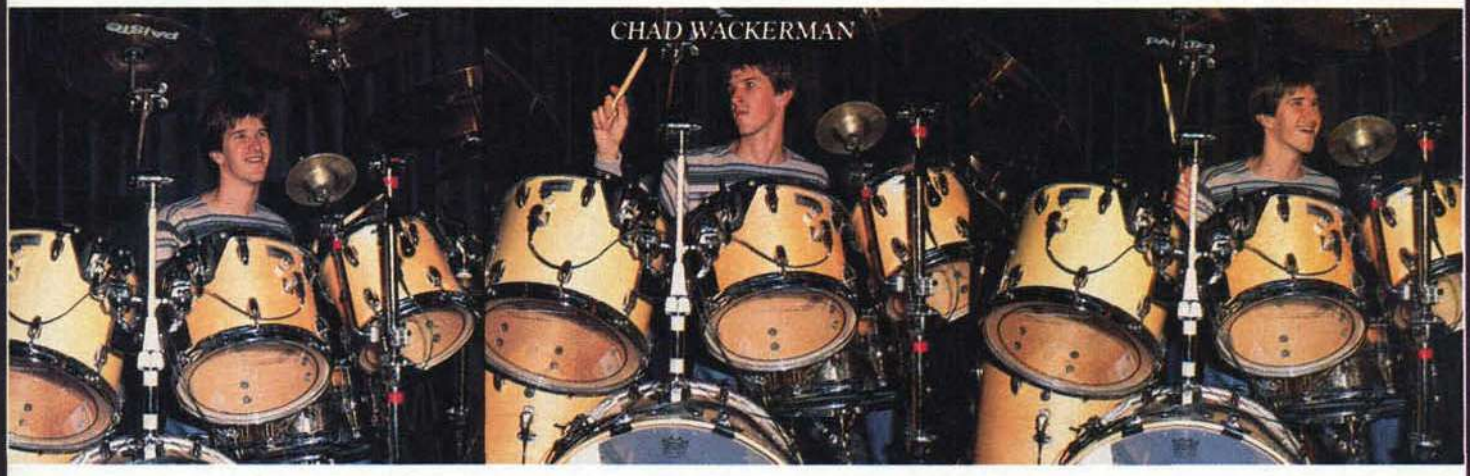
M.I.M.S. and the *McLaren Report* are operating out of temporary offices at 18522 Mariposa Dr., Villa Park, CA 92667, (714) 532-5272. Permanent offices are under construction, with the address to be announced later.

Update continued from page 128

Congratulations to **Craig Krampf** for winning the Grammy in the Movie or TV Special Score category as a writer on the *Flashdance* album. **Gregg Bissonette** on the TV soundtrack for *The Master.* You can expect **Mark Craney** on Hughes-Thrall new record as well as Jim Diamond's summer release recorded in Holland. He was also on Gregg Rollie's album which saw a March release. Coup D'Etat has a new drummer, **Jerry Angel,** who replaces **Keni Richards. Terry Bozzio** on tour with Missing Persons. **Roger Taylor** on tour with Queen. **Hal Blaine** on TV's *The Duck Factory, Buffalo Bill* and *We've Got It Made.* **Prairie Prince** doing preliminary work on David Pack's solo LP. **Jeff Porcaro** on *Dune* soundtrack. **Andy Newmark** is currently on tour in Europe with Roger Waters (ex-Pink Floyd) supporting Roger's solo album, *The Pros And Cons Of Hitchhiking.* The group, featuring Eric Clapton, will tour the States in July. **Terri Lyne Carrington** appears in the film *Beat Street.* **Vince Gutman** working with Stix's Dennis DeYoung on solo project.

MayEA lets a sound artist get into his sound





Simon Phillips and Chad Wackerman understand the need for drummers and sound engineers to achieve the optimum in drum reproduction. That's why they choose MAY EA to enhance all areas of sound reinforcement. Sound engineers find MAY EA complimentary to their talents because EA eliminates acoustic phase cancellation and isolates a wide range of resonance frequencies. And in the studio, the possibilities are even more exciting! From the small club to the large concert hall–take control of your sound.

See your local dealer or call...

mayea

8312 Seaport Drive
Huntington Beach, California 92646
(714) 536-2505

The microphone element (a modified SM-57) is manufactured exclusively by SHURE BROTHERS, INC. for MAY EA.
MAY EA is protected under U.S. Patent #4,168,646. Other U.S. and Foreign patents pending.

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JUST DRUMS

GRETSCH CENTENNIAL BROCHURE

Gretsch recently released its latest product brochure commemorating its 100 years of drum building heritage. While including a brief overview of the company's history, it highlights recent developments in drum outfit configurations. New natural wood finishes and colors are portrayed in a poster-size collage with emphasis on new *Techware* stands, pedals, thrones and multi-clamps.

Seventeen internationally known Gretsch artists are caught "in action" with snapshots; also included is a poster-size color photograph of an eighteen-piece kit with the heads "on fire," entitled "When You're Hot."

The *Centennial Brochure,* a graphically unique promotional piece, is available with accompanying price list, without cost, through any authorized Gretsch dealer, or by writing Gretsch Marketing Services, P.O. Box 1250, Gallatin, Tennessee 37066.

PAUL REAL TO DISTRIBUTE RIFF RITE STICKS

Paul Real Sales has announced that they will be distributing Riff Rite graphite drumsticks in both foreign and domestic markets. The graphite fibers that are used in the manufacturing of Riff Rite sticks are resilient and resistant to stress and fatigue, so that while the sticks do have a wood-like grain, they have a durability that can exceed conventional wooden drumsticks by up to eight times. They also feature a uniform consistency of weight, shape and balance. Riff Rite sticks are available in *ROCK, 5A, 5B,* and *6A* models. For more information contact: Paul Real Sales, 745 Oak Knoll Circle, Pasadena, CA 91106, (800) 722-0558.

BOSS HC-2 HAND CLAPPER

The new Boss *HC-2 Hand Clapper* offers realistic hand-clap sounds for use both on stage and in the studio. The *Hand Clapper's* touch-sensitive pad can be operated by hand, or by using a drumstick. The force with which the pad is struck determines the volume of the clap sound, and pad sensitivity can be adjusted. An External Input control is also provided, allowing the *HC-2* to be triggered by means of an external synthesizer or drum machine.

Detailed control of the clapping's tonal characteristics is provided by the *HC-2's* Hall and Dry controls. The Hall control regulates the acoustic field, providing everything from the ambience of a large concert hall to the properties of a small studio. The Dry control provides a range of sounds from dry, crisp clapping, to the thick, broad sound you get when many hands are clapping.

The *HC-2* can be powered by either a nine-volt battery or an AC adaptor. It measures 3.74" wide by 2.52" high by 5.34" long, and weighs one pound. For more information, contact RolandCorp US, 7200 Dominion Circle, Los Angeles, CA 90040, (213)685-5141.

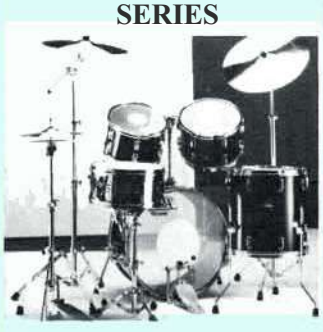
INNERLOCK STANDS FROM DRUM WORKSHOP

Drum Workshop is proud to announce its new line of hi-hat and cymbal stands. The *Innerlock* system features cymbal stands that have no external locks or clamps, allowing them to telescope together for convenient breakdown and storage. The stands are totally adjustable in height, and once a desired height is established, an internal locking mechanism within the stand allows it to be reset to exactly the same spot every time. This eliminates the need to color code, tape, or in some other manner identify component parts of stands that must be disassembled completely, in order for the drummer to pack up.

The cymbal stands and hi-hats feature wide, double-braced legs for stability. Also evident is DW's attention to minor details, like steel wing-screws and threads, instead of cast metal, to prevent stripping.

DW's *Innerlock* cymbal stand is really three stands in one, since the basic straight stand can be converted to either a mini-boom or a full-sized telescoping boom by adding interchangeable lengths of tubing. DW's new hi-hat will be similar in performance to the classic Camco/DW hi-hat of past years, but built into the heavier *Innerlock* tripod design. For further information, contact Drum Workshop, 2697 Lavery Court Unit 16, Newbury Park, CA 91320, or call (805) 499-6863.

PEARL EXPORT SERIES



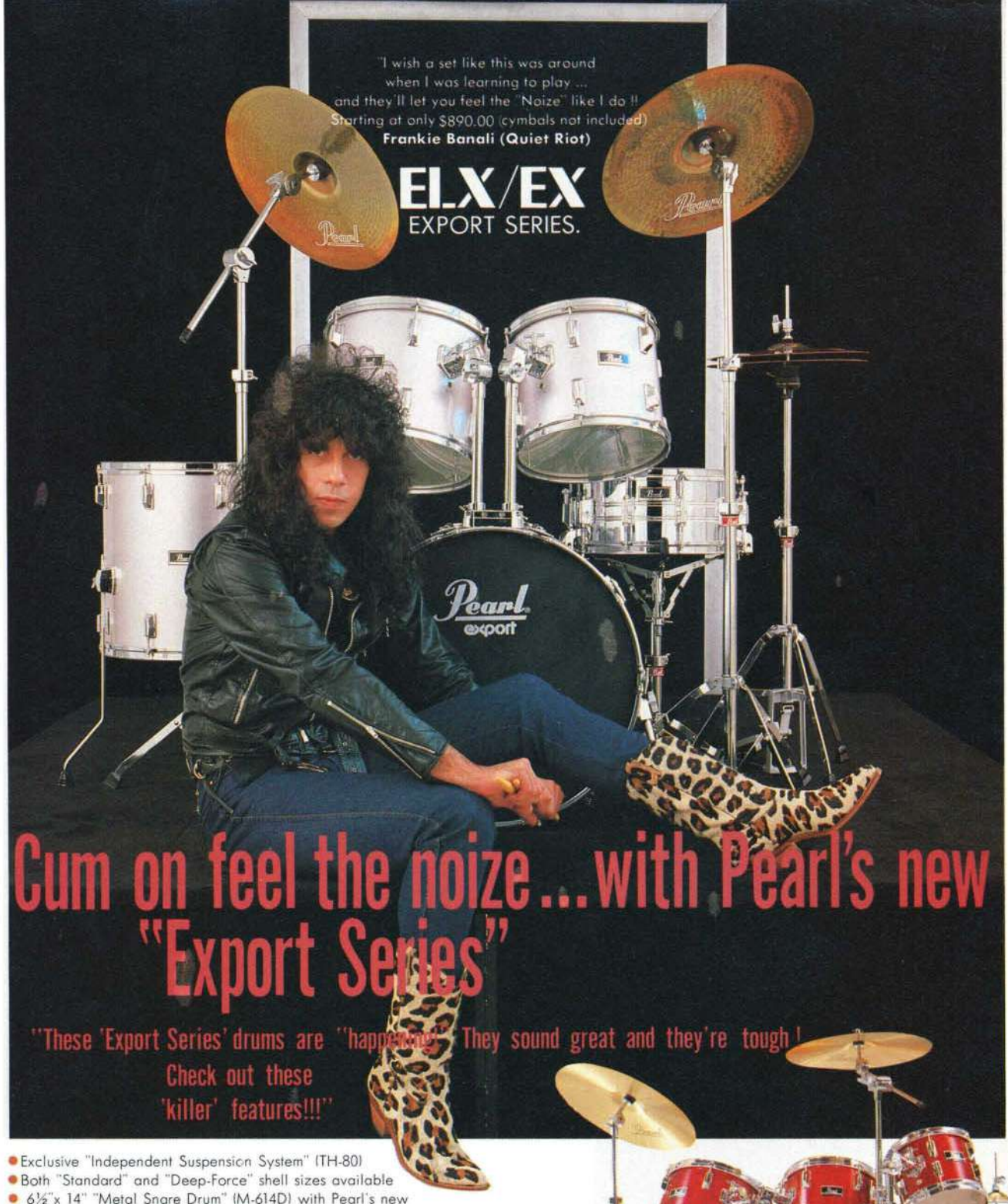
Pearl has announced the introduction of their new *Export Series,* with two drumset lines: the *ELX/EX-5300 Export* and the *ELX/EX-5500 Export Deep Force.* Both lines include the following features: birch wood plies *(ELXonly); Acousti-Coat* sealer; professional lugs; independent tom suspension system; wood bass drum hoops; convertible rubber tip-to-spike bass drum spurs; *Easy-Action* snare strainer; *P-750* bass drum pedal; *B-800* cymbal boom; and *C-800* cymbal stand. The *Deep Force* kit features deep-shell rack toms, and is supplied with Pearl's *Black Beat* front bass drum head. Pearl states that the kits in the *Export* series are priced to keep them within the reach of all players. For further information, contact Pearl International, Inc., P.O. Box 111240, Nashville, TN 37222-1240, or call (615) 833-4477.

CASTALIA KEYBOARD POSTER

The Keyboard Poster is a 24" x 36" fine art print and musical reference chart that contains just about everything a musician needs to know about the harmonic structure of popular music. Designed as a cross-reference "roadmap," the charts and tables on *The Keyboard Poster* work together in an easy-to-understand system that can aid drummers who are interested in increasing their knowledge of music theory. It will show you how to find any chord or scale in any key, transpose chord progressions, and figure out melodies and chord and scale combinations for many styles of music. Included on the poster are: a four-octave life-size keyboard; the Great Staff; Circle of Fifths (bass and treble key signatures); The Table of Keys (a transposition table); The Chord and Scale Table (an index of all the chords and scales commonly used in popular music shown in relation to the styles in which the chord/scale combinations are most widely played). *The Keyboard Poster* is sold in music stores or from Castalia Publications, Box 2503, Petaluma, CA 94953.

"I wish a set like this was around
when I was learning to play ...
and they'll let you feel the "Noize" like I do !!
Starting at only $890.00 (cymbals not included)
Frankie Banali (Quiet Riot)

ELX/EX
EXPORT SERIES.



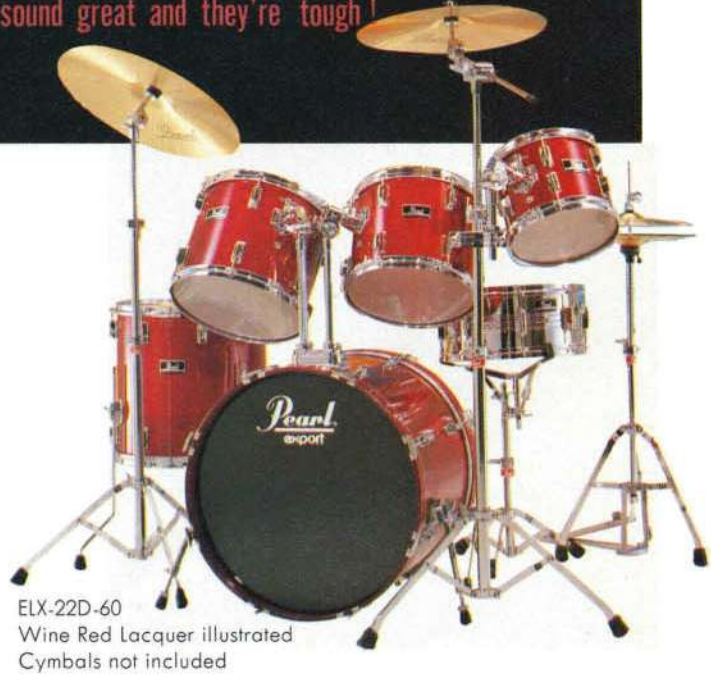
Cum on feel the noize...with Pearl's new "Export Series"

"These 'Export Series' drums are "happening". They sound great and they're tough!
Check out these
'killer' features!!!"

- Exclusive "Independent Suspension System" (TH-80)
- Both "Standard" and "Deep-Force" shell sizes available
- 6½"x 14" "Metal Snare Drum" (M-614D) with Pearl's new "Easy-Action" strainer as standard equipment.
- P-750 Foot Pedal
- Available in today's most "asked for" colors
- AX-30 (three hole) adaptor allows you to customize your set-up
- Convertible rubber/spike tipped bass drum spurs let you play on any surface (anytime, anywhere)
- Solid wood hoops ... "ELX Series"
- "White Dot" heads on all batter sides
- "Black Beat Heads" on "Deep-Force" series.

For a full color catalog, please send $2.00 for postage and handling to:
In U.S.A.: Pearl International, Inc., P.O. Box 111240, Nashville, TN. 37222-1240
In Canada: Pearl Dep., 3331 Jacombs Road, Richmond, B.C. Canada, V6V 1Z6

Pearl®



ELX-22D-60
Wine Red Lacquer illustrated
Cymbals not included

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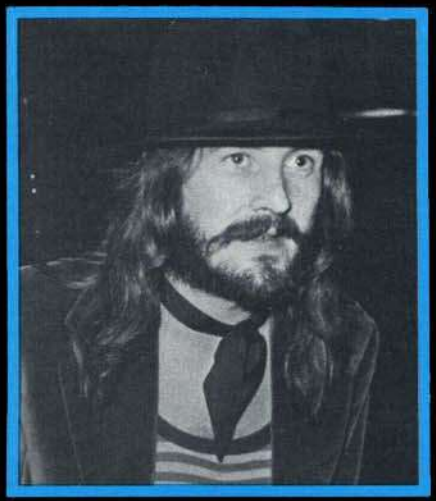


John Bonham

Phil Ehart

Plus:

Inside Simmons

Rashied Ali

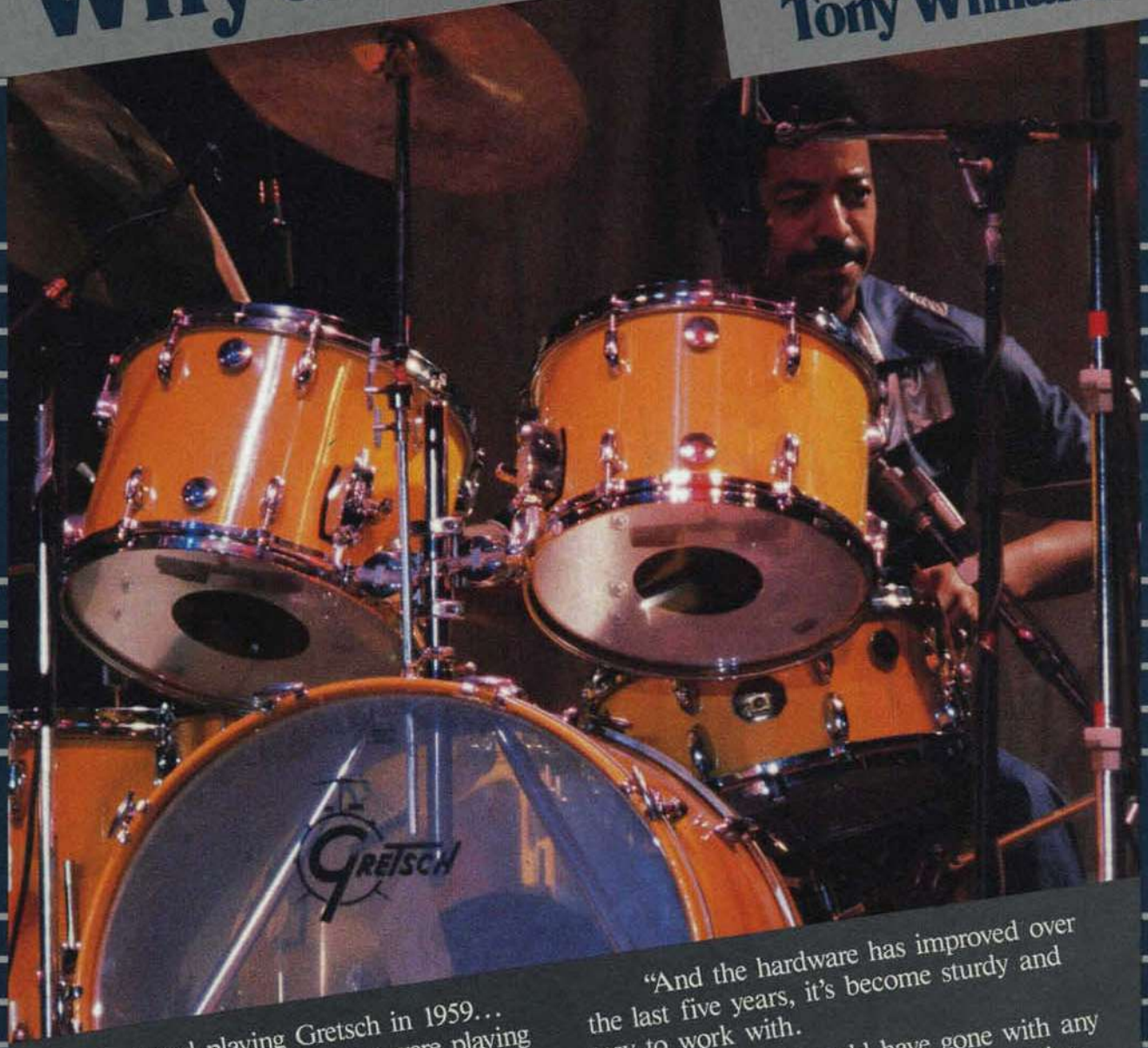
Louis Hayes

Readers Poll Results

AND MUCH MORE... DON'T MISS IT!

Why do I play Gretsch?

Tony Williams



"I started playing Gretsch in 1959... because *my* favorite drummers were playing Gretsch: Max Roach and Art Blakey.

"The idea Gretsch is just a jazz drummer's drum is silly. It's a lot more than that. You can change a Gretsch drum to sound different ways, and that's not necessarily true of other drums. That's one of the things I like about Gretsch drums.

"It's a very identifiable sound—very round, it carries alot of tone color.

"And the hardware has improved over the last five years, it's become sturdy and easy to work with.

"You know, I could have gone with any drum company over the years—but staying with Gretsch meant more to me than anything anyone else had to offer.

"The sound is there."

GRETSCH®

Tony Williams

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For a color poster of Tony Williams, send $3.50 for postage and handling (check or money order) to Gretsch Poster TW, P.O. Box 1250, Gallatin, TN 37066.

ZILDJIAN CRASH CYMBALS AND THE ART OF PUNCTUATION

Punctuating the flow of the music with crashes is based on drawing the sound *out* of the cymbal. It doesn't matter whether you get your crash sound by cuffing the cymbal on the side, glancing it or popping it on the shoulder or bell.

But using different playing techniques to get the full variety of possible crash effects is only half the story. You need a crash cymbal with all of those sound possibilities built into it. Each Zildjian crash has a totally individualized tonal blend that responds to *all* of your playing techniques so that you can express yourself better as a drummer.

Zildjian

You can choose from six different types of Avedis Zildjian crash cymbals for an unparalleled variety of tonal ranges and attack/decay characteristics. Each Zildjian crash is painstakingly crafted to the world's most exacting standards — our own.

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Depending on the particular blend you're looking for, take the time to *listen* to a variety of cymbals. Like Zildjian's Medium Thin Crash, the world's most popular crash cymbal, which provides exceptional pitch flexibility, high end response and sustain. Our popular Medium Crash produces a robust, full-bodied sound with a higher pitch.

K

The legendary reputation of K. Zildjian cymbals comes from their deep, dark sound and dry tonal character. The K. Dark Crash epitomizes this classic sound and works extremely well in tandem with Zildjian A's to widen the dimensions of your overall sound.

amir

The Amir Crash has a crisp, bright, fast-rising sound with a smooth decay and controlled overtones. Both the 16" and 18" sized Amir Crashes can blend in well with any Zildjian set-up.

IMPULSE

The new Zildjian Impulse line's raw explosive attack and long range projection of the rhythmic pulse is embodied in the Impulse crash. Its focused overtone threshold allows repeated crashes without overtone build-up.

The limitless sounds, tone colors and textures implicit in Zildjian crash cymbals are an important part of developing your individual drum sound. If you really *play* your crash cymbals, you can't help but hear the differences that exist among them. And those differences are what make Zildjian the only serious choice. For a white paper on Zildjian Crash Cymbals, please write to the Avedis Zildjian Company, Longwater Drive, Norwell, Mass 02061.

Zildjian®
The only serious choice.